

# Modes and Manners of Religious and Theological Knowing

Peter John Hampson



## **Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation**

### **Declaration Form.**

1. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed.....

Date .....

2. This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of .....

Signed .....

Date .....

3. This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated.

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references.

A bibliography is appended.

Signed candidate: .....

Date: .....

4. I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available for photocopying, inter- library loan, and for deposit in the University's digital repository

Signed (candidate).....

Date.....

### **Supervisor's Declaration.**

I am satisfied that this work is the result of the student's own efforts.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

## Dedication

To my father - for my early walks

## Acknowledgements

Behind even the shortest academic work stand a number of people who tacitly or explicitly have supported its author in its construction; this thesis is no exception. In my case I owe debts of gratitude to several people not only for their immense knowledge, wisdom and intellectual stimulation but in some cases for their friendship, which I had not expected to follow as part of an MTh course, but for which I am eternally grateful and stand humbly in awe.

Among these I think particularly of my Lampeter (now Trinity St David's) tutor, mentor and research collaborator, Johannes Hoff, an intellectual beacon if ever there was one and the wisest, 'maverick', mystical theologian I have met, Simon Oliver for his perspicacious and lucid rendering of the occasionally opaque 'radical orthodoxy', and for encouraging me to 'trust my theological instincts', and Zoë Lehmann Imfeld, my fellow student, colleague, and friend, for help with catching intellectual butterflies on Ledi Alp and in Einsiedeln, *in vivo* testing of chapter 2, and 'studious' discussions over 'unusual' afternoon tea. Special thanks to all three for their collegiality, companionship, kindness and unfailing support. Praise!

Two other friends and former colleagues, Vittorio Giovine and Joshua Schwieso, also assisted. Vittorio boosted my confidence that I could convince a perceptive polymath Neapolitan of at least some of my claims, and Joshua, a fellow member of the UWE escape committee, helped restore some faith in contour lines and the mathetic, and contributed over numerous coffees to my growing appreciation of the wisdom and radicalness of pre-modernity.

Among my new Oxford friends and colleagues, Vivian Boland, OP (now transported to Rome) deserves mention for without him – and Gino's restaurant – my physical as well as my intellectual appetite would be less well satisfied. Fr Andrew Pinsent provided a timely check on my initially too hasty rejection of attempts to make global philosophical sense of cognitive neuroscience, and my student, Kathryn Newell, immediately appreciated the relevance of such work to religious cognition and began thinking through some of its further

implications making me more secure in my delusions. John Cottingham, unbeknown to himself at the time, encouraged me to persist in my view of Wordsworth as a non-pantheist.

Thanks too to the former Regent of Blackfriars Oxford, Richard Finn, OP, the Vice-Regent, Richard Conrad, OP and their brethren for sharing with me, a Visiting Fellow, glimpses of their way of life and for making available the facilities of such a hospitable and truly enlightened institution. In no small part this has helped me to complete this thesis.

I should also like thank Paul Burgess, for his bemused permission to reproduce his creative, 'Tubular Fells' map, and the late Alfred Wainwright for his wonderful Lakeland Guides.

My companion on the entire way, however, is my wife Shelagh Fagan who has walked with me, in cities and mountains, fields and towns, for over 30 years with good grace, unfailing humour and unflagging support, 'Fagan's grumble' aside. Without her love and constant companionship many journeys would simply not have taken place. Her blue pen also helped me avoid the more egregious infelicities of expression and those remaining are entirely my responsibility. Our children, Margaret and Joseph, may *tollit et lege* one day, if so I shall have been doubly blessed.

Finally, I have dedicated this small piece of work to my father, James Kenneth Hampson, who intuited much that it contains, but lacked the words to express it. I hope he would have enjoyed and appreciated it.

Feast of Mary Help of Christians, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012

## Summary

Following a brief introduction, an extended analogy invites the reader to experience vicariously ‘walking in the mountains’ as opposed to the ‘view from the 110<sup>th</sup> floor’ to allow her to appreciate at first hand the distinctions and interactions between two key *modes* of (religious and secular) knowing and attending: one, the ‘pre-reflexive’, which is direct, lived, affect laden and ‘participatory’, the other, the ‘reflexive’ or ‘re-presentational’, which is more indirect, detached, dispassionate and analytic. The two modes and their interaction are further examined and illuminated using the scientific and cultural work of polymath Iain McGilchrist, and the spiritual poetic recollections of the English Romantic poet William Wordsworth. The modes are then briefly deployed to elucidate key theological distinctions, such as the arguably false dichotomy between the subjective and objective, and to question the apparent wholesale rejection of representational modes of thought by followers of the Radical Orthodoxy school. Instead, it is shown that a fruitful interaction between the two modes is feasible, thereby holding out the possibility of combining the analytic and the narrative (or following Eleanore Stump, the ‘Dominican’ and ‘Franciscan’) theological sensibilities. Next, in a theological move indebted to and informed by the work of Paul Griffiths, two *manners* of knowing, the ‘curious’ and the ‘studious’, are contrasted and used to position the morally and spiritually more neutral modes already outlined. It is suggested that both the pre-reflexive and reflexive modes can be exhibited in curious or studious manners. Such positioning is offered as an example of a theological ‘grammar’ used architectonically to organise secular scientific and cultural categories. Finally, aspects of the theological anthropology implied by this positioning are used to suggest apologetic principles worthy of consideration and future development.

## Contents

Acknowledgments	ii
Summary	iv
Chapter 1: Prolegomena: Definitions and Preliminaries	1
Chapter 2: Narrative and Reflection: Walking in the City and Walking in the Mountains	8
Chapter 3: Modes of Knowing: A Psychological Lexicon and Implications for Theology	25
Chapter 4: Manners of Knowing: Deploying a Theological Grammar	49
Chapter 5: Epilogue and Conclusions: Understanding Communication: Toward a Post-modern Apologetic	66
Bibliography	77
Appendices	
Appendix 1: Tubular Fells	84
Appendix 2: Mountain Meditation	85





## Chapter 1

### Prolegomena: Definitions and Preliminaries

*Matins and vespers of harmonious verse...*

*.....Many were the thoughts  
Encouraged and dismissed, till choice was made*

*Wordsworth, The Prelude, Book I, line 45, lines 70-71*

People, especially those nurtured in the Christian tradition, have at their disposal the sufficient *means, manners, modes* and *mechanisms* – the actualities, potentialities and pre-requisites of the situated and embodied Christian life – to support, guide and, in this existence, partially to satisfy their natural desires for God (the Good, the True, and the Beautiful), despite the fallen and damaged condition in which we all live. Understanding this in more detail can help improve our apologetics. These claims are partially explored and selectively illustrated in this thesis.

Before proceeding further, and risking a pedestrian note right at the start, some definitions are useful since I am using these terms in an unfamiliar and potentially unique way. By ‘means’, I refer to the deposit of faith, the Scriptures, the out-working through space and time of the Christian tradition, ecclesial authority, the Eucharist, the apostolic witness and, overall, to the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, ‘The Way, the Truth and the Life’ (Jn 14:6). In other words I refer to the whole panoply – the religious, spiritual, cultural, social, psychological, *content* and *resources* - of the Christian life. The focus here is multi-levelled but at the very least and in this limit case is theological, metaphysical and ontological. At the other extreme, by ‘mechanisms’ I mean the physical and psychological *apparatus* or equipment (bodily, sensory, neural, cognitive, affective, social) which provides the necessary pre-requisites for living, loving, knowing and, ultimately, flourishing fully. An

appeal to mechanisms allows us to answer such questions as what are the structures, processes, systems which allow religious and spiritual life to be cashed or 'realised' (in one sense of real) by incarnated beings, or embodied souls? How do people accomplish such things as worship, prayer, virtuous acts and theological reflection? Concern here is primarily epistemological and arguably most effectively addressed by modern psychology, which, as we know, is 'modern philosophy with data'.<sup>1</sup> In between means and mechanism, however, are modes and manners. 'Modes' refers to in what way people come to know things. The full meaning of this term will become obvious later, but for now it is interesting that the term is adverbial in operation. It is in part, therefore, picking out epistemological issues - it asks a 'how' question - but it does so in a way that implicates being and knowing in action: *what* are the modes in which we can know? In what state or states of being are we when we know? Hence its focus is also partly ontological. Finally 'manner', is another term I have pressed into service here. Manner is related to mode, indeed it could be defined as that species of mode with explicit moral or spiritual valence or especial theological relevance. Manner refers to the ways in which we can come to know for a purpose, in either mode, and satisfy our intellectual appetites. And the underlying assumption behind its usage is that some of these are desirable and others less so. Again, I shall put flesh on these bones later.

The thesis will, for the most part, be concerned with modes and manners of religious knowing and to a far lesser extent with means and mechanisms. As such it occupies an interesting hinterland between psychology and Christian theological anthropology, and though the theology-psychology relationship is not of focal concern here, the stance adopted with respect to it governs the first of two major working assumptions which we can

---

<sup>1</sup> Peter Hampson and Johannes Hoff, 'Whose self? Which unification? Augustine's anthropology and the psychology-theology debate', *New Blackfriars* 91.1035 (2010), pp. 546-566, (p. 549).

harmlessly think of as ‘working hypotheses’.<sup>2</sup> This is that an adequate, by which is meant sufficient, theological anthropology will ultimately require resources from psychology as well as theology for its discernment and construction. Such resources, it is suggested, will typically involve global overviews and their resulting conceptual and philosophical implications, rather than a detailed specification of micro theories - hence the focus on overall mode rather than detailed mechanism. But any systems or theories deployed by theology cannot be allowed to cross theological borders without some scrutiny of their credentials. In particular, some attention, however cursory, will need to be given to their history and ontological assumptions, tacit or otherwise. Anthropologies whose pedigrees spring mainly from the human sciences will thus need to be subjected to an overarching theological grammar (not Lindbeckian)<sup>3</sup> whose semantics can be thought of as identifying theologically significant patterns of knowing, loving, desiring and acting expressed through underlying psychological activities - hence the additional focus on manner.

A second major assumption refers to a specifically theological issue but one which has resonances in other disciplines; this is that critiques of the so called representational theory of mind associated with Radical Orthodoxy scholarship can too easily be overstated.<sup>4</sup> Representationalism may well be a wrong turn, but this does not imply that ‘re-

---

<sup>2</sup> ‘Harmlessly’ in that I am not committed to a hypothetico-deductive, Popperian mode of enquiry with its associated empirical tests.

<sup>3</sup> Like Lindbeck, as will become apparent, I am using ‘grammar’ in a regulative sense but not in the sense of regulating linguistic expression so much as organising the ontology of knowing and acting, hence theology governs psychology, cf. George Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Post-Liberal Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), pp. 17-18.

<sup>4</sup> Examples of such critiques include: Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), see especially, ch 2, ‘Spatialisation the Middle of Modernity’, pp. 47-100. For a related critique of the ‘buffered self’ see Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge Mass.: The Belknap Press, 2007), especially pp. 37-42, 134-142, and for an interesting account from a historical perspective, see Fernando Cervantes, ‘Philosophy, Theology and Historical Knowledge’, in Oliver Crisp, Mervyn Davies, Gavin D’Costa, and Peter Hampson (eds), *Christianity and the Disciplines: The Transformation of the University* (London: Continuum, 2012), pp. xx.

presentations' are neither used nor needed by human beings. Just as, for example, although theologies based solely on 'experientialism' may be misguided,<sup>5</sup> this does not negate the existence, importance nor necessity of experience, spiritual, religious or otherwise. So we can accept the inevitability of representations without commitment to a strong version of representational-ism. In fact this guiding assumption has stronger force. Its subtext is that reflection on life experiences and practice invariably requires a form of reflexivity itself grounded in 'representational redescription'<sup>6</sup> or, better perhaps, 'experiential redescription', and that the 'reflexive turn' of late modernity is not then simply inevitable and regrettable but can be deployed, to good effect, humbly, charitably and empathically.

The thesis is structured in such a way as to open up this family of issues. In chapters 2 and 3 the distinctions between modes and manners of knowing will be explored and illustrated with particular reference to two recent works, one cultural and scientific-psychological, the other theological, by psychiatrist and literature scholar Iain McGilchrist and theologian Paul Griffiths respectively.<sup>7</sup> Finally, I attempt to make good the claim that the critique of representationalism needs to be nuanced and briefly suggest that late modernity can be helped to recover from the anxieties provoked by its reflexive excess, thereby improving our apologetics.

The thesis thus effects a number of moves and perspective shifts, and some preparation of the reader for these in order. It develops from an invitation to a vicarious

---

<sup>5</sup> See for example the detailed arguments in Denys Turner, *The Darkness of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), pp. 253-273.

<sup>6</sup> Annette Karmiloff-Smith, *Beyond Modularity: A Developmental Perspective on Cognitive Science* (London and Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 15-26.

<sup>7</sup> Iain McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009); Paul Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009).

first-hand experience (chapter 2), through an explication based on third party science and cultural considerations (chapter 3), to the moral and spiritual (chapter 4), ending with the applied and practical (epilogue) – a move overall from the experienced to the psychological, through the cultural to the theological, and finally by way of promissory note to the applied-pastoral. A companion on the journey is the English Romantic poet, William Wordsworth who exemplifies so well the feeling-intellect.<sup>8</sup> But perhaps the most important shift is the reversal of explanation, from the potential to the actual (chapters 2-3) to a dynamic which ultimately moves from the actual to the potential (chapter 4 et seq.).<sup>9</sup>

This prolegomena introduces the thesis as a whole, but the thesis as whole itself, it is hoped, is prolegomenic to a deeper consideration of the constraints on and possibilities for a postmodern Christian apologetic and dialogue with secularity. The thesis proper is thus self-contained yet incomplete, though hopefully in a way that points beyond itself. It is incomplete too in a second sense. In acknowledging an apophatic core at the heart of *all* knowing, not merely our theological, since this apophaticism includes our self-knowledge, the thesis stands as a reminder of the ultimate limitations of human cognition and its products. As Wills puts it, succinctly citing Augustine, ‘We seek one mystery, God, with another mystery, ourselves. We are mysterious to ourselves *because* God’s mystery is in us.’<sup>10</sup> Even were there no other Christian reasons to be hospitable in our dialogue with others, and there are,<sup>11</sup> here is one overwhelming reason why our apologetics cannot be

---

<sup>8</sup> John Milbank, ‘Foreward: An apologia for apologetics’, in Andrew Davison (ed.), *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy and the Catholic Tradition*. (London: SCM Press, 2011), p. xxii-xiii; John Milbank, ‘The New Divide: Romantic vs. Classical Orthodoxy’, *Modern Theology* 26, 1 (2010), pp. 26-38 (p. 28).

<sup>9</sup> See Simon Oliver, ‘Actuality in Theology and Philosophy’, in Christopher Craig Brittain and Francesca Aran Murphy, *Theology, University, Humanities: Initium Sapientiae Timor Domini* (Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011), pp. 91-111.

<sup>10</sup> Gary Wills, *Saint Augustine* (London: Phoenix, 2000), p. xii.

<sup>11</sup> Luke Bretherton, *Hospitality as Holiness: Christian Witness amid Moral Diversity* (London: Ashgate, 2006).

based on dominance, power and dogmatic assertion: in the limit case we simply do not know and are not fully in control of our knowing. And such knowing and loving and desiring as we do enjoy are pure gifts. To think and act otherwise is to live narcissistically, nominatively,<sup>12</sup> and ultimately violently, as if we and we alone are in control and in the driving seat, when we are called to live selflessly, datively<sup>13</sup> and with true *humilitas*. 'Pride asserts, humility testifies' writes Augustine,<sup>14</sup> and this is another quiet but important sub text of this work.

One final opening observation: the theological tradition of pre-modernity, at least in its pre-Scotist phase, was one in which the modern splits between fact and value, reason and emotion, faith and reason and, hence, spirituality and theology had yet to occur. Anselm, for instance, prays his way into the Proslogion and the unspoken pre-requisite for theological exploration as faith-seeking-understanding was that the reader as well as the writer be in the right psychological and spiritual frame of mind, with open heart, and receptive to gift. Religious knowing, spiritual ascent and theological explication were, rightly in my opinion, intertwined in pre modernity. The thesis begins, therefore, with an invitation to engage in the contemplation of two types of panorama intended to help activate, if only intuitively, tacitly and pre-reflexively at this stage, a set of relevant ideas, background assumptions, and mental models in the reader, and also to assist her to contemplate and, if she chooses, to pray her way into the thesis. The next chapter is therefore as much a showing and an invitation to contemplation as it is a telling.

---

<sup>12</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 31-33.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Cited in Wills, *St Augustine*, p. xvi

## Chapter 2

Narrative and Reflection: Walking in the City and Walking in the Mountains



*Such might be gleaned  
From the great City, else it must have proved  
To me a heart-depressing wilderness;  
But much was wanting: therefore did I turn  
To you, ye pathways and ye lonely roads;  
Sought you enriched with everything I prized,  
With human kindnesses and simple joys.*

*Wordsworth, The Prelude Book XIII, lines 113-119*

Published in 1984, Michel de Certeau's seminal, prescient, poignant essay, 'Walking in the City', contrasts Manhattan seen from the 110<sup>th</sup> floor of the World Trade Centre, where 'Beneath the haze stirred up by the winds, the urban island, a sea in the middle of the sea, lifts up the skyscrapers over Wall Street, sinks down at Greenwich, then rises again to the crests of Midtown, quietly passes over Central Park and finally undulates off into the distance beyond Harlem',<sup>1</sup> with the activities and movements of the 'ordinary practitioners of the city (who) live "down below"'.<sup>2</sup>

One of de Certeau's purposes in writing his piece was 'to locate the practices that are foreign to the "geometrical" or "geographical" space of visual, panoptic, or theoretical constructions'.<sup>3</sup> Such practices are the actual, messy, lived lives of the everyday which, like the routes and walks through a city, are often at variance with and disruptive of the planned and geometricized two-dimensional city space – a space that is devoid of messiness, depth,

---

<sup>1</sup> Michel de Certeau, 'Walking in the City', ch 7, in Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> De Certeau, 'Walking in the City', p. 93.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

and life, but which is beloved by the cartographer and urban planner.<sup>4</sup> In de Certeau's image, the vantage from the then fixed platform on the 110<sup>th</sup> floor is dispassionate, elevated, and singular in its perspective. It is a view irrevocably separated from the intersecting trajectories of lives down below. I quote the relevant passage at length for the reader's convenience, because it will be useful to our purposes later in this essay, and because I cannot improve on its imagery or expression:

To be lifted up to the summit of the World Trade Center is to be lifted out of the city's grasp. One's body is no longer grasped by the streets that turn and return it according to an anonymous law; nor is it possessed, whether as player or played, by the rumble of so many differences and by the nervousness of New York traffic. When one goes up there, he leaves behind the mass that carries off and mixes up in itself any identity of authors or spectators. An Icarus flying above these waters, he can ignore the devices of Daedalus in mobile and endless labyrinths far below. His elevation transfigures him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world by which one was "possessed" into a text that lies before one's eyes. It allows one to read it, to be a solar Eye, looking down like a god. The exaltation of a scopic and gnostic drive: the fiction of knowledge related to this lust to be a viewpoint and nothing more.<sup>5</sup>

This 'god's eye view' is arraigned by critics of the so called representationalist theory of mind and the basis of much subsequent scientific rationality;<sup>6</sup> this is the idea that we are somehow imprisoned as subjects distanced from an apparently objective reality, which we

---

<sup>4</sup> 'These everyday practices by ordinary people are what make the city lived space as opposed to mere concept-space'. Phillip Sheldrake, 'Placing the Sacred: Transcendence and the City', *Literature & Theology*, Vol. 21. No. 3 September 2007, pp. 243-258, p. 251. And prompting reflection on our part on how life inevitably pushes through the cracks in the pavement as with recent anti-capitalist camps: 'The 'weak', in this case those who actually live in the city rather than plan it, find ways to make space for themselves and to express their self-determination', Sheldrake, 'Placing the Sacred', p. 250.

<sup>5</sup> De Certeau, 'Walking in the City', p. 92

<sup>6</sup> Pickstock, *After Writing*, see especially, ch 2, 'Spatialisation the Middle of Modernity', pp. 47-100. Johannes Hoff argues that 'The theoretical formulation of these concepts can be traced back to Descartes' *Discours de la méthode*, which was published together with his *Dioptrics* and *Geometry* in 1637. However, both concepts had already rapidly emerged 200 years earlier after architect Filippo Brunelleschi's public 'demonstrations' of the linear perspective in Florence in 1425. The modern concepts of science and culture were not invented by scientists, but were rather the outcome of an artistic vision of space.' Johannes Hoff, *The Analogical Turn. Re-thinking (Post-) Modernity with Nicholas of Cusa* (Series 'Interventions' - Eerdmans Publishing Company, forthcoming), p.1 (MS/ introductory material). Hoff expertly traces a full genealogy of the connections between representationalism and perspectivalism in the body of his forthcoming work.

can see only as a spectator or through some form of mediation – think of the telescope one often finds on viewing platforms. But the human attempt at a god's eye view, we note, ultimately yields a limited perspective.<sup>7</sup> The summit may be obvious, and depth there is, of sorts, but the distance is hazy. The vantage is fixed and actually does not permit gnostic omnivoyance, only its illusion.<sup>8</sup> Objects in so far as they are visible are typically only seen through only one of their facets. A given street, for example, may be seen but only from one angle. Others are and remain invisible. Their existence can be deduced or to a certain extent intuited, but the lives of those within them might as well not exist.

In moving back from the top to street level, there is, as de Certeau recognises, only the abrupt managed incarcerated transition in the elevator, an 'Icarian fall'.<sup>9</sup> Again, the post 9/11 poignancy of this is now obvious to us. For de Certeau, however, it is the gap between the panoptic and the everyday which matters. The everyday whose activities, he points out, as 'networks of ...moving, intersecting writings compose a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator... (and) in relation to representations...remain(s) daily and indefinitely other'.<sup>10</sup> Nature of sorts is here, and life as experienced, but somehow dissociated from geometricized and represented culture.

De Certeau's influence should not be underestimated. His creativity in articulating a grammar of the everyday, using the analogy of the walk or route in terms of speech acts, is seminal indeed. In privileging the quotidian it becomes clear that beneath the strategic

---

<sup>7</sup> Sheldrake puts it well: 'There we are (or were) lifted out of Manhattan's grasp—becoming voyeurs not walkers. We then 'read' the city as a simple text. But this is really an illusion'. Sheldrake, 'Placing the Sacred', pp. 250-251.

<sup>8</sup> Compare with the account of genuine omnivoyance in Nicholas of Cusa, *De Visione Dei*, in Jasper Hopkins (trans.), *Nicholas of Cusa's Dialectical mysticism: Text, Translation, and Interpretive Study of De Visione Dei* (Minneapolis: Arthur J. Banning Press, 1985). For access to PDF version, see <http://jasper-hopkins.info/dialecticalmysticism.pdf> (accessed 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> De Certeau, 'Walking in the City', p. 92.

<sup>10</sup> De Certeau, 'Walking in the City', p. 93

view from above, the tactical 'rhetoric of walking' awaits.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, and relevant to our aims, his critique of representationalism has influenced thinking beyond the boundaries of cultural theory. Contemporary systematic theology, especially that dubbed 'radically orthodox', has taken to heart the critique of representational theory of mind offering instead an older ontology in which mind and world are co-constitutive and both ultimately owe their form and existence *qua* modes of being to their participation in the divine life.<sup>12</sup> De Certeau has also made serious study of the differences and complementarities between thinkers such as Bourdieu and Foucault.<sup>13</sup> All this is helpful and important.

But is the critique based on the view from the 110<sup>th</sup> floor correct? Or, better, is it sufficient and hence inevitable as an account? Let us leave Manhattan and reflect instead on walking in the mountains by way of an extended simile.<sup>14</sup> There are a number of similarities between the prospect from a tall building and walking in the mountains, of which the most obvious are the trajectories of walking 'down below' and the view from 'on

---

<sup>11</sup> 'There is a rhetoric of walking. The art of "turning" phrases finds an equivalent in an art of composing a path (*tourner un parcours*). Like ordinary language, this art implies and combines styles and uses. *Style* specifies "a linguistic structure that manifests on the symbolic level ... an individual's fundamental way of being in the world"; it connotes a singular. Use defines the social phenomenon through which a system of communication manifests itself in actual fact; it refers to a norm. Style and use both have to do with a "way of operating" (of speaking, walking etc.), but style involves a peculiar processing of the symbolic, while use refers to elements of a code. They intersect to form a style of use, a way of being and a way of operating', de Certeau, 'Walking in the City', p 100.

<sup>12</sup> Participation is a frequent theme in Radical Orthodoxy scholarship. See for example, Pickstock, *After Writing*, pp. 122, 129. For an intriguing psychological account of consciousness which resonates with pre-modern accounts of the union of the knower and known see Max Velmans, *Understanding Consciousness* (London: Routledge, 2009).

<sup>13</sup> See chapter 4, 'Foucault and Bourdieu' in de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, pp. 45-60.

<sup>14</sup> At this stage it is worth signalling that the writer does not uncritically accept the 'journey metaphor' for life. Without endorsing his anti-realist views, there is much to be gained from Cupitt's creative explorations of the metaphors of life in everyday speech, see Don Cupitt, *The New Religion of Life in Everyday Speech* (London: SCM Press, 1999). But it is nevertheless one deeply rooted in our embodiment, see George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), pp. 193-194. And similes are not metaphors of course.

high'.<sup>15</sup> In both situations there is a distancing, through height and separation, from the complex, messy lives of street or valley, especially if one arrives by cable car as a surrogate elevator. But here the close similarity ends since it is in the relation between the two, the lives and the view, and the nature of the distancing, wherein the more interesting differences lie.<sup>16</sup>

The reader may find it helpful to refer to Figures 1 and 2 at this point.<sup>17</sup> Standing at 3210 feet (978 metres) Scafell Pike is the highest mountain in England and if by Himalayan or Alpine standards it is a relatively modest peak it boasts, nevertheless, some of the most impressive rock and fell scenery in these islands. Situated near the centre of the Borrowdale volcanic massif, an ancient geological area now much eroded, Scafell Pike(s) is a complex mountain, comprising three summits: Broad Crag, Ill Crag and the Pike itself. Hidden away it can be approached only by long routes from four valleys: Wasdale Head, Eskdale, Borrowdale, or Great Langdale. As the indomitable Wainwright puts it in his discussion of

---

<sup>15</sup> See also Belden Lane, *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring Desert and Mountain Spirituality* (Oxford: OUP, 1998 – OUP pbk, edition 2007), for a connected appreciation of aspects of remote landscapes though ultimately different theological and philosophical foci from the present work.

<sup>16</sup> It is clear that de Certeau is also aware of this. In a subsequent essay, 'Spatial Stories', chapter 9, in de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, pp. 115-130, he writes, 'I would like ...to try to specify the relationships between the indicators of "tours" and those of "maps", where they exist in a single description. How are *acting* and *seeing* coordinated in this realm of ordinary language..? The question ultimately concerns the basis of everyday narrations, the relation between the itinerary (a discursive series of operations) and the map (a plane projection totalizing observations), that is between two symbolic and anthropological languages of space. Two poles of experience. It seems that in passing from "ordinary" culture to scientific discourse, one passes from one pole to the other.' de Certeau, 'Spatial Stories', p. 119. In 'Walking in the City'. De Certeau dramatically illustrates the contrast between these two poles which he then explores in terms of the historico-cultural dominance of one, the scientific, over the other, the "ordinary". My approach here will be to explore, imaginatively, the possibility of a transcendent *tertium quid* between the two.

<sup>17</sup> References are to Alfred Wainwright, *A Pictorial Guide to the Lakeland Fells: Book Four: The Southern Fells* (Kendal: Self Published by author, 1960, engraved and printed by the Westmorland Gazette), Scafell Pike, 1-30. The following paragraphs refer to Wainwright's maps and entries on Scafell Pike, thus SP 1 = Scafell Pike 1 etc. Elsewhere Wainwright states that his guides are 'in very truth a love letter', Wainwright, *A Pictorial Guide to the Lakeland Fells: Book One: The Eastern Fells*, introduction. On seeing the Lake District for the first time, at age twenty-three he writes, 'I gazed in disbelief at the loveliness around me. I had never thought there could be beauty like this, never imagined such enchantment, never known there could be such colour and charm in a landscape', Alfred Wainwright, *Fell Wanderer: The Story Behind the Guide Books*, (Kendal: Westmorland Gazette, 1966), p. 21, and pointedly: 'There is no worshipping of false idols on the mountains, but, instead, deep awareness of a Creator', Wainwright, *Fell Wanderer*, p. 19.

whether Scafell Pike is, justifiably, a mountain: 'Roughness and ruggedness are the necessary attributes, and the Pike has these in greater measure than other high ground in the country – which is just as it should be, for there is no higher ground than this' (SP 5). In this respect the Pike is the greatest (actual) mountain, in England – one which can not only be thought but can be seen. (Though, in Anselmian fashion perhaps, there are, of course, greater mountains which can be seen, others which can be thought, and others, perhaps, which unthinkably exceed any that can even be thought).

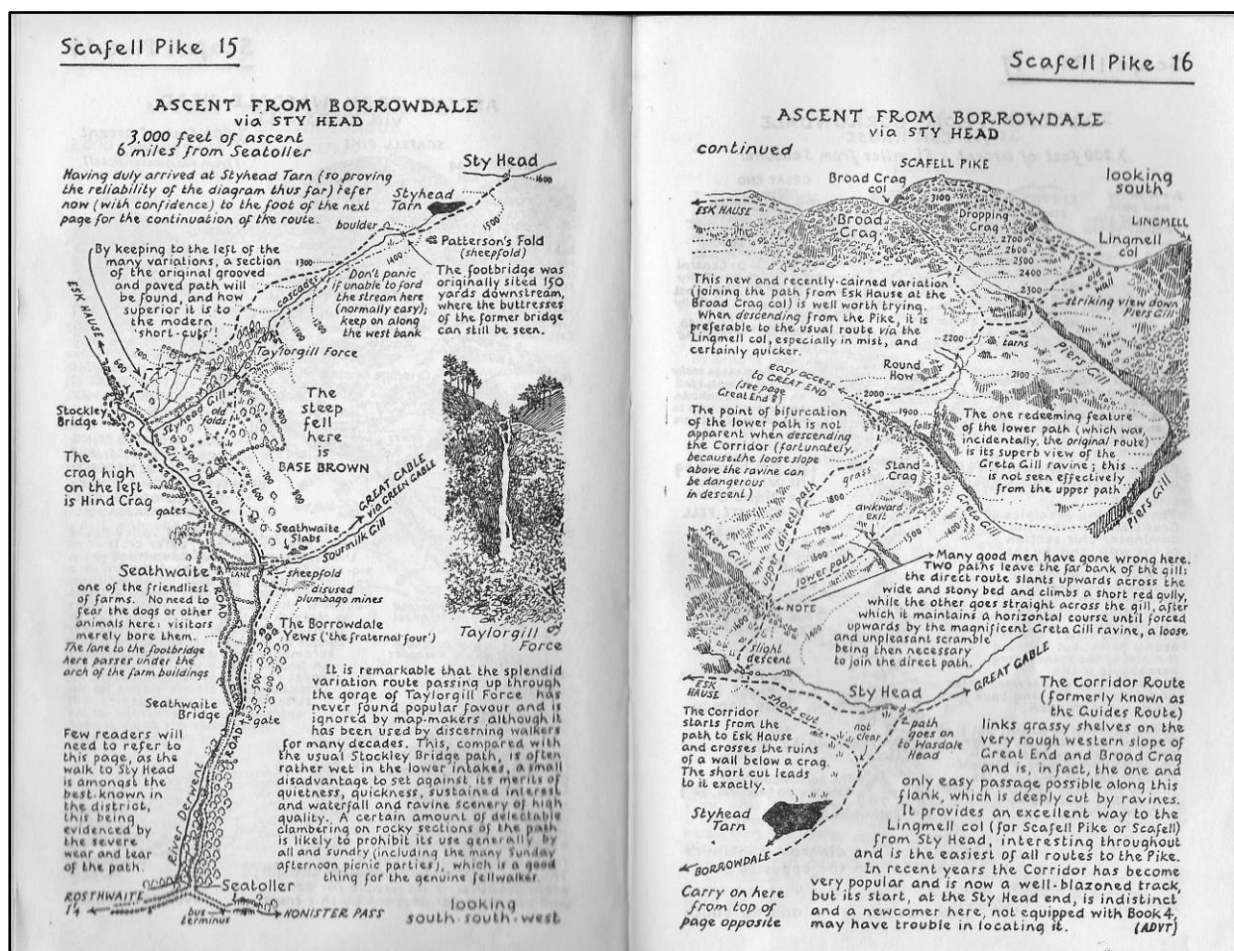


Fig 1. Ascent of Scafell Pike from Borrowdale via Sty Head as described and depicted by Alfred Wainwright – see text for explanation (SP 15 and SP 16 in text).

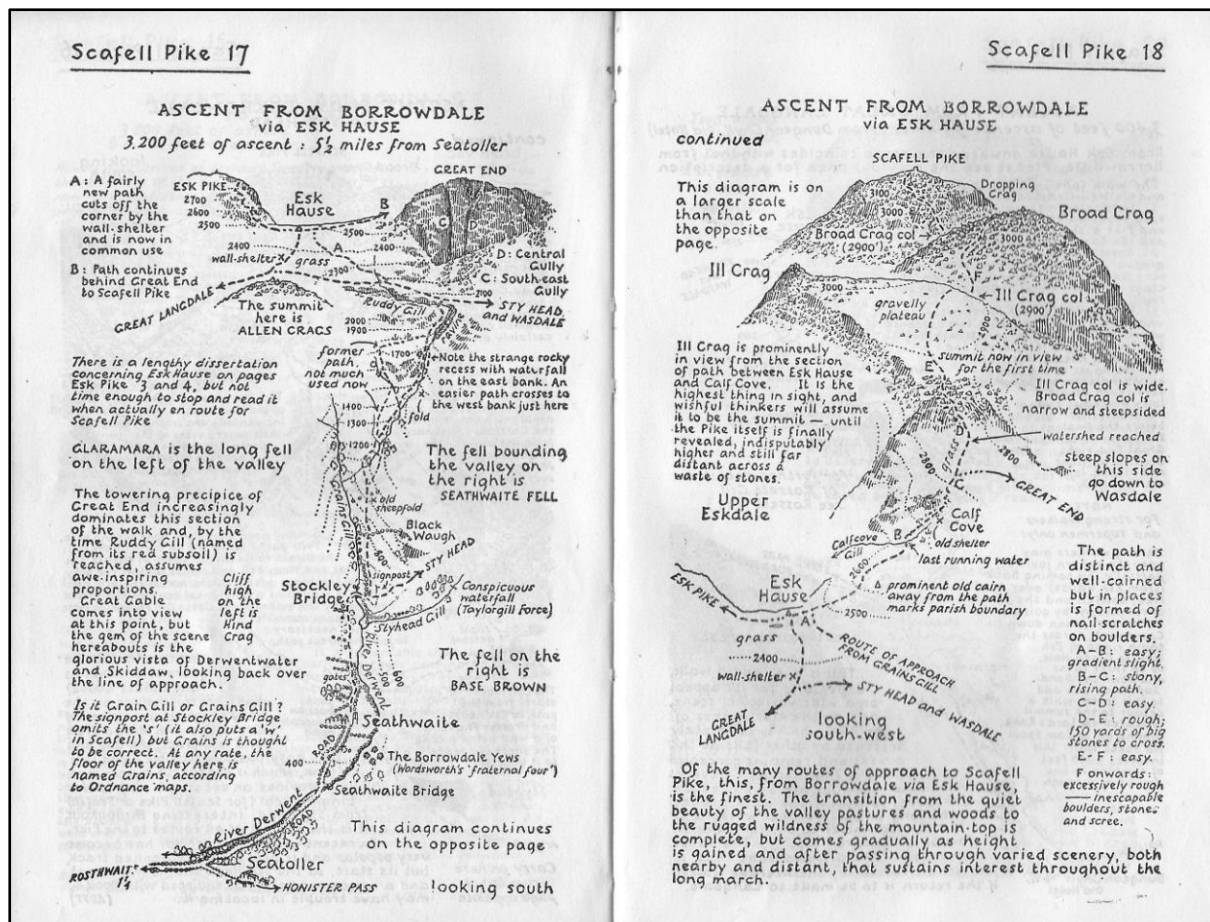


Fig 2. Ascent of Scafell Pike from Borrowdale via Esk Hause as described and depicted by Alfred Wainwright (SP 17 and SP 18 in text).

So much for a fairly neutral description of the terrain, but what can we say of a walk on a mountain like this? The reader may wish to use Figures 1 and 2 (SP 15-18) to locate and reflect on concepts referred to in this paragraph. Walks such as this in the Lake District typically begin in the pastoral, cultivated, and human, and end in the majestic, the awesome and sublime (SP 18). The walker gradually loosens her hold on the familiar and secure, leaving behind the farms, the folds, the cottages, shelter and sustenance to embark on a long, stony and arduous climb since as Wainwright reminds us 'this is a full-day expedition and the appropriate preparations should be made', (SP 12). Sometimes there are misleading paths (SP 16). Sometimes there are routes which generations of discerning

walkers have trodden and etched and trodden again but cartographers have not recognised. (SP 15), Sometimes it seems the summit is in sight – ‘Ill crag is often assumed by wishful thinkers...to be the summit’. (SP 18) At various points vistas open and close and other neighbouring giants come into view. So, ‘the towering precipice of Great End’ dominates the walk from Borrowdale via Esk Hause, and by Ruddy Gill has reached ‘awe inspiring proportions’. Great Gable comes into view at this point but the gem of the scene hereabouts is the glorious vista of Derwentwater and Skiddaw, looking back over the line of the approach.’ (SP 17).

On entering the mountains, the dynamic of the walk takes hold and the views open up. And it is actually the *continuity* of the change from valley to peak which most distinguishes seeing, say, Derwentwater from Scafell Pike from the view from the 110<sup>th</sup> floor. Yet such continuities, paradoxically achieved through discontinuities and the changing views they afford, are elusive. For the walker lives in, moves through, and is part of the scene in a way that she cannot be on a static viewing platform, and in moving views are both revealed and concealed. The qualities of layering and depth of mountain scenery mean that it unfolds and enfolds as the walker engages with and embraces its intimacies.<sup>18</sup> Now a view is seen, now not, now from another perspective, now covered by mist,<sup>19</sup> now a surprise glimpse, now hidden again: the scene never fully exposed, but always erotically

---

<sup>18</sup> A move beyond pantheism is available here. Although creation is in a sense an unfolding from and enfolding back into God, as Nicholas of Cusa points out: ‘...creation’s going out from You is creation’s going in unto You; and unfolding is enfolding. And when I see You-who-are-God in Paradise, which this wall of the coincidence of opposites surrounds, I see that You neither enfold nor unfold—whether separately or collectively. For both separating and conjoining are the wall of coincidence, beyond which You dwell, free from whatever can be either spoken of or thought of, Cusa, *de Visione Dei*, §47.

<sup>19</sup> There alternates a correlation and complementarity of weather and mood in the mountains which merits future exploration in terms of thought, feeling and prevailing ‘cultural climate’. For further thoughts on ‘climate, as influencing the feelings through its effect on the object of sense’ see William Wordsworth, *A Guide to the Lakes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, first published under the pseudonym, Rev Joseph Wilkinson, by R. Ackerman, 1810), pp. 45-48, (p. 48).



glimpsed.<sup>20</sup> And such moving views can be *moving* views; they move one.<sup>21</sup> The moods and feelings of the walker, their desires, their affections, and memories unfold as they are evoked by and resonate with their surroundings: brooding cliffs, bubbling becks, still and deep tarns. Compared with standing at a fixed viewpoint, the sheer fact of walking, moving and being moved, and talking with companions, even if now dead guide book writers, uncovers more understanding of the whole in its full relationality.

As she climbs from the valley our walker sees cultivation gradually yield to the natural, but at no point is there a sharp divide between culture and nature, nowhere can we definitively say, ‘now *here*, the wilderness *really* begins, now *there* the hand of civilisation, or of faith and reason, is *finally* absent!’ The valley can expose one to nature at its grandest and bleakest, and yet, higher up, despite the rugged rock scenery, there is typically some sign of human engagement as a beck is bridged, a sheep fold discovered, or a dry stone wall used as a shelter. And from above, even as in a different landscape, we see the cultivated field borders, through Wordsworth’s eye, as ‘these hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines of sportive wood run wild’,<sup>22</sup> and reflect on how different all this is from the apparent disjunction of lives and manufactured culture on which we stand in a city. In any case, the

---

<sup>20</sup> John Keats writes of a similar wonderful effect of the mists when climbing Ben Nevis which formed ‘large dome curtains, which kept sailing about, opening and shutting at intervals here and there and everywhere; so that, although we did not see one vast wide extent of prospect all round, we saw something perhaps finer – these cloud-veils opening with a dissolving motion and showing us the mountainous region beneath as through a loop-hole, these cloudy loop holes ever varying and discovering fresh prospect east, west, north and south. Letter to Thomas Keats, 3 August 1818, In E.C Pettet (ed.), *A Selection from John Keats*. (London: Longman, 1974). Keats appears to have had an intuitive appreciation of the invisible and the apophatic. And notwithstanding the Buddhist references the following link helps beautifully illustrate this:

<https://plus.google.com/110258598415939907971/posts/X9XUrmpaKEc>

<sup>21</sup> As John Cottingham puts it, ‘...our religious (and moral and aesthetic) experience involves *transformative ways of perceiving reality*’, John Cottingham, *The Spiritual Dimension: Religion, Philosophy and Human Value* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 85, italics in original.

<sup>22</sup> William Wordsworth, ‘Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey, on revisiting the Wye during a tour, July 17<sup>th</sup> 1798’, In *Wordsworth Poetical Works*, edited by Thomas Hutchinson (Oxford: OUP, 1904, pbk, 1969), p. 163, line 15-16. All subsequent references to Wordsworth’s work are to this edition.

walker carries thoughts, feelings, even poetry, redolent with archetypes, with her on the mountain as she passes 'natural objects' on her way. Perhaps she encounters the Borrowdale Yews as she climbs. (SP 15):

But worthier still of note  
Are those Fraternal Four of Borrowdale  
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove  
Huge trunks! and each particular trunk a growth  
Of intertwined fibres serpentine...  
  
.....beneath whose sable roof  
Of boughs, as if for festal purposes decked  
With unrejoicing berries – ghostly Shapes  
May meet at noontide: Fear and trembling Hope,  
Silence and Foresight; Death the Skeleton  
And Time the Shadow;<sup>23</sup>

Notice here how Wordsworth's experience of and reflections on the yews are carried through time to continue their ghostly celebration. Retained in the walker's memory and cued by the yews themselves and their 'neutral' record on the map (SP 15), they are returned and re-presented to the scene which triggered them in the first place. The already naturally colourful skein of culture is given a further, delightful, twist and knotted back as nature partly prompts its own reading.<sup>24</sup> In this way, the Scriptures and the lives of the saints can come to illuminate our own path; as de Certeau accurately observes, 'the long

---

<sup>23</sup> Wordsworth, 'Yews-trees', pp. 146-147, lines 13-17; 23-28.

<sup>24</sup> Helen Vendler's perspicacious account of the fusing of nature and culture in Milton could just as easily apply here: '...the natural is interpenetrated by the cultural....Nature, here is not pre-human but integrated with civilised thought and reference, just as it is, in a different respect, integrated with mythological fancy and personified spirits.' Helen Vendler, *Coming of Age as a Poet* (Cambridge Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 26. Behind this, however, is what Milbank refers to as 'the concealed primacy of *natura naturans* over *natura naturata* ('nature naturing' over 'nature natured') which is brought out further by the embeddedness of the imagination when that 'natural object 'humanity' is concerned', Milbank, 'Foreward: An apologia for apologetics', In Davison (ed.), *Imaginative Apologetics*, p. xxiii. See also Wordsworth's beautiful reflections on the fell Helvellyn and its environs which look benignly down on the annual rustic fair below, where(human) being is seen as well as seeing, Wordsworth, *The Prelude, Book VIII*, pp. 547-548, lines, 1-69.

poem of walking manipulates spatial organisations.....It inserts its multitudinous references and citations into them.’<sup>25</sup>

Nor is there only one approach to the summit, nor one royal road to truth. Trajectories, walks, lives, rational traditions, can converge and also diverge. One is motivated to try the walk from Borrowdale (SP 15), another eschews it for Eskdale (SP 21); different routes ascend to the same place from the same valley (SP 15, SP17) ; one path leads one to the summit, another goes astray. From one valley the others are typically unseen. Other summits give different views of the same valley – and with time and effort we see that we can get from one to the other. Pace varies too. It can often be hard to dawdle in the city and it is a sociological commonplace that one needs to justify one’s behaviour in a public place, but in the Lakes the poet tells us we have time to stand: ‘I gazed and gazed but little thought what wealth the show to me had brought.’<sup>26</sup>

Thus far we have reflected on the walk itself, but the map is also alive with walks and trajectories that are not just visible even in such pictograms as Wainwright’s; for the experienced walker even a standard OS projection can be read as affording walks to be discerned first and experienced later, or contemplated, lived, and then recollected. In this way the ‘totalizing observations’<sup>27</sup> of the map are sometimes needed to enrich the journey, and contour lines and spot heights are good examples of this.<sup>28</sup> But look again at Figures 1 and 2. Wainwright’s depictions *imaginatively* link map and route, overview and lived trajectories, the analytic (spatial) and narrative (temporal) readings seamlessly combined

---

<sup>25</sup> De Certeau, ‘Walking in the City’, p. 101. Even at a basic level, as Sheldrake points out, ‘environment shapes the human spirit’. Sheldrake, ‘Placing the Sacred: Transcendence and the City’, pp. 244.

<sup>26</sup> Wordsworth, ‘Daffodils’, p. 149, lines 17-18.

<sup>27</sup> De Certeau, ‘Walking in the City’, p. 119.

<sup>28</sup> I am grateful to Dr Joshua Schwieso for this observation.

we might say. They encapsulate the many ascents and descents of their author, the photographs he took, the sketches he made, his musings on the walks, his feelings of elation, fatigue, satisfaction, awe and wonder. We only have to compare this with the schematised map of the London underground or the grid plan of Manhattan, or, more amusingly, with Peter Burgess's creative depiction of the Lake District as tube map in Appendix 1, to realise that in Wainwright's depictions we have a serious attempt to combine the lived and the re-presented so that the lived is contextualised and interpreted by the re-presented and the re-presented is vivified by the former, *and future walks of others are thus enriched*.<sup>29</sup> Notice too that Wainwright has to come at his subject from a variety of ways. In '*The Southern Fells*' he devotes thirty pages of affectionate text, sketches, diagrams, maps, and pictograms to Scafell Pike alone.<sup>30</sup> The impression is of someone struggling, frustrated to show, as much as tell, what he has loved: 'it's like this, and this, no, like this...and then again look from here...'. Admittedly, there are limitations. All maps are abstractions and there are an infinite number of possible routes. Unlike reality a map must still commit to one or other vantage. The routes are schematised too to the extent that their syntax serves as 'the long march of everyman' even though their semantics were once the possession of

---

<sup>29</sup> None of this is intended to denigrate the importance of overviews. Survey maps are intended to provide *truthful* representations which accurately capture places, geographical features *and their inter-relationships*. Even topological maps, such as *Tubular Fells* (Appendix 1) provide important knowledge of relations between places. And such abstractions provoke insight: 'Yet may we not entirely overlook/The pleasure gathered from the rudiments/ Of geometric science...../With Indian awe and wonder, ignorance pleased/ With its own struggles, did I meditate/ On the relation those abstractions bear/ To Nature's laws...' Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Book VI, p. 530, lines 15-17; 121-124. But knowledge from overviews alone can be meaning-*less*, or at least meaning-*lite* and so insufficient for a full understanding.

<sup>30</sup> Wainwright even has a charming 'Soliloquy' to be read on the summit on why does a man (sic.) climb mountains. It may be, he writes, 'solace for some, satisfaction for others: the joy of exercising muscles that modern ways of living have cramped, perhaps; or a balm for jangled nerves in the solitude and silence of the peaks; or escape from the clamour and tumult of everyday existence. It may have something to do with a man's subconscious search for beauty growing keener as so much in the world grows uglier...Or it may be and for most walkers it *will* be, a deep love of the hills, a love that has grown over the years, whatever motive first took them there: a feeling that these hills are friends, tried and trusted friends, always there when needed'. (SP 24). Not bad for a guidebook writer, and prompts the thought that our lives and reflexions at best help imperfectly depict the face of God, our friend.

one or few. In this way even Wainwright's depictions are limited as are the maps of a city, but at least there is a striving to connect the poetics of walking with the science and topography of the terrain.<sup>31</sup> There is, too, a closer connection between path and terrain which can often only be seen and therefore re-vivified by walking the paths again.<sup>32</sup>

Walking in the mountains brings with it a depth of vision. Distant landscapes emerge, as in Romantic art, as 'a succession and progression, of distances, each giving place to the next, by which the viewer is inexorably drawn into the imagined scene'.<sup>33</sup> And depth brings transition, shade, nuance, longing and loss. Sometimes, surprisingly to the untutored eye, the distant is clearer than the foreground, especially if light shines or snow reflects from a peak, but yet it is unattainable as hope, longing, and loss combine. 'Distance in time and place not only expands the soul, but inevitably enters it into a state of awareness of separation and loss...', as McGilchrist writes.<sup>34</sup> Paradoxically, however, depth and distance enter into creative tension with 'between-ness', the suspended middle. In the mountains, I am now here and the valley is there, but I arrived here on a connecting path. That mountain is inexpressibly distant, but one day I shall get there - maybe. Between-ness allows us to 'feel something that is Other, certainly, but also something of which (we) partake'.<sup>35</sup> To anticipate what comes later again it is partly this separation-in-togetherness that limits the

---

<sup>31</sup> See also Mary Midgley, *Science and Poetry* (London: Routledge, 2001), especially pp. 38-46.

<sup>32</sup> De Certeau writes. 'It is true that the operations of walking on can be traced on city maps in such a way as to transcribe their paths (here well-trodden, there very faint) and their trajectories (going this way and not that). But these thick and thin curves only refer, like words, to the absence of what has passed by. Surveys of routes miss what was: the act itself of passing by. The operation of walking, wandering, or "window shopping," that is, the activity of passers-by, is transformed into points that draw a totalizing and reversible line on the map. They allow us to grasp only a relic set in the nowhen of a surface of projection. Itself visible, it has the effect of making invisible the operation that made it possible. These fixations constitute procedures for forgetting. The trace left behind is substituted for the practice. It exhibits the (voracious) property that the geographical system has of transforming action into legibility, but in doing so it causes a way of being in the world to be forgotten...', De Certeau, 'Walking in the City', p. 97.

<sup>33</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 361.

<sup>34</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 362.

<sup>35</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 363.

extent of our intimacies,<sup>36</sup> and which requires us to stand silent and chastened in the face of our mutual ignorance, venality and dissimulation. All of which is worth special early mention here, for much of this is the natural extrapolation of a particular manner of knowing which leads at least as far as first-order transcendence, and which always already carries with it feelings of loss and lament.<sup>37</sup>

A final observation: de Certeau's useful insight is to think of the walks at street level as stories. But I suggest that if walks and routes are stories then what we have been calling the overviews can be their plots, though sometimes walkers remain unaware of these. Or again, as Newman puts it with a related but higher order analogy, the primary religious engagement (the walk we might say) is akin to poetry whereas subsequent, philosophical-theological commentary (the overview) is akin to literary criticism. Reflecting more deeply on Wainwright's maps we can take this further. It is apparently possible, in mapping terms at least, to pull stories and plots together such that the map becomes the plot of all stories, while still combining them in their particularity; the individual-general held in creative tension we might say. How does Wainwright achieve this? Surely by *repeated* though non-identical trips<sup>38</sup> to the same terrain through which he was able to build up a picture of the general through which he then further explicates and integrates his particular walks. Wainwright creatively shows that the first-person experienced and the person-spectator perspectives can be reconciled, *or at least held together in the same frame*. But it is

---

<sup>36</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, pp. 129-138, for a thoughtful discussion of intimacy and its limits.

<sup>37</sup> Nowhere perhaps is this more beautifully depicted than in Schubert's *lieder*, *der Wanderer*, D.493, especially when wonderfully illustrated by the paintings of Caspar David Friedrich, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BR8\\_n-B8qu0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BR8_n-B8qu0). Arguably, at the end there is the ironic acknowledgement of the fruitlessness of the search and the acceptance of 'second order transcendence', lecture by Professor J. Hoff, London, December, 2008.

<sup>38</sup> For a useful discussion of 'non- identical repetition', see John Milbank, 'The Grandeur of Reason and the Perversity of Rationalism: Radical Orthodoxy's first Decade', in J. Milbank and S. Oliver (eds.), *The Radical Orthodoxy Reader* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 377-378, 391, 392.

intuitively and immediately apparent from such maps and, it has to be said, even more obvious from a visit to the Lake District itself, that there is still much more to know and, most likely, more than can be known of the construction of the general from the individual, the resulting qualification of the individual, and, most importantly, the individual-general pairing. Whether the dyad involved is the walk-map, the experienced-remembered, the narrative-analytic, or the participated-represented, a basic glimpse of dyadic reconciliation is possible, but this same glimpse further implies that far more than can be perceived and conceived is involved in its full appreciation and indwelling. Why is this? It is because while the apprehension of the *possibility* of epistemic and ontological reconciliation can be accomplished slowly, sequentially and dialectically (this much we must surely allow Hegel ), a full appreciation of its complete, reconciled *actuality* is immediate and overflows as a result of its own *excessus*. Compare the awe-ful experience of actually walking in the mountains with even the best Wainwrightian depiction. Moreover, and crucially I suggest, it is only the *actuality* which renders the possibility of reconciled depictions in the first place *by providing the ground or affordance for all our knowing*.

## Conclusions

Hopefully together we have now set up something of an interactive, meditative mental model<sup>39</sup> for the rest of the thesis, to help us contemplate how the routes experienced, the way, and the terrain somehow combine. It may be worth repeating a point made earlier: religious knowing, spiritual ascent and theological explication are intertwined. But how is this connection effected and what, ultimately, is it that connects them? A standard answer

---

<sup>39</sup> For a rigorous account of imagery based mental models see Phillip N. Johnson-Laird *Mental Models* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983).

might be that the same dynamic of faith-seeking-understanding is present in all three, but faith, as we know, ‘perfects the intellect’<sup>40</sup> suggesting that there are pre-requisite *modes* of thinking and being which are already ripe for perfection by faithful *manners* of engagement with the world. These we will consider in the next two chapters.

First, however, I invite the reader who wishes to do so to refer to Appendix 2 to make what I hope is an obvious (optional) but hopefully not clichéd, prayerful connection with these observations in order to prepare for the rest of the thesis, since he had already rejected the devil’s panoptic offer from the ‘*parapet of the temple*’ (Mt 4:5) when ‘*after sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray*’. (Mt 14: 23).

---

<sup>40</sup> St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 2a2ae.1.3.ad 1.



## Chapter 3

Modes of knowing: a psychological lexicon and implications for theology

*The vacancy between me and those days  
Which yet have such self-presence in my mind  
That, musing on them, often do I seem  
Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself  
And of some other Being.*

*Wordsworth, The Prelude, Book II, lines 29-33*

*And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.*

(T. S. Eliot. The Waste Land)

A defining characteristic of much modern scientific psychology is its ontological opacity and attendant confusion.<sup>1</sup> A child of modernity and recent descendant of modern philosophy,<sup>2</sup> psychology has taken the epistemological turn to heart. It typically asks ‘how’ of its subject matter in the sense of ‘what are the mechanisms by which such and such a thought or act can be carried out and how do they work?’ To take a pedestrian example, if we ask ‘how does Jones walk?’ we might answer with direct reference to the motor system, action plans, the vestibular apparatus, the muscles, the nerves, the sinews and the principles of traction and gravity. By contrast we can ask how in the sense of ‘in what mode?’, or ‘in what way?’ Answering might now involve reference to the jaunty, suspicious, shambling or assertive way in which Jones perambulates, what his walking is like. The first set of answers uses the accusative case and refers to mechanisms; the second refers adverbially to modes or ways

---

<sup>1</sup> Peter Hampson and Eolene M. Boyd-MacMillan, ‘Turning the telescope round: reciprocity in psychology-theology dialogue’, invited contribution to the *Archive for the Psychology of Religion* 30 (2008), pp. 93-113, (p. 102).

<sup>2</sup> Hampson and Hoff, ‘Whose self? Which unification? Augustine’s anthropology and the psychology-theology debate’, p.549.

of doing and being, ways of using mechanism. Essentially the same mechanisms can of course support or contribute to different modes. We can walk, run, or pirouette using the same limbs. By focussing on mode rather than mechanism we at least begin to approach if not fully recover a proper ontological perspective on the person, what characterises them rather than merely how they work (at the crude level of mechanism). This in my opinion is one of the key insights extensively explored by Iain McGilchrist in his magnum opus, *The Master and his Emissary* whose work I introduce here. An important focus of this chapter is thus on modes of knowing, as understood at least naturalistically, and their relation to theological knowing and theological method.

Theological knowing is a particular case of general knowing.<sup>3</sup> In common with all forms of intellectual activity it can only recruit the mechanisms of the human intellect, will and imagination, modulated by the emotions,<sup>4</sup> supported by God, and make use of its normal modes, to further its understanding of the objects of faith and faith itself. And theological knowing, like all knowing, can be carried out more or less conscientiously, humbly, charitably, in a more or less appropriate *manner* as we shall see later.

This chapter will begin to explore these issues, and the reader may find it helpful to consider in advance to what extent the reality encounters depicted in the last chapter are analogues of different theological methods. Specifically, and crudely at this stage, to what extent are certain theological methods, especially the analytic and the narrative, analogous to the contrasts and disjunctions in the view from the 110<sup>th</sup> floor and from street level? Or

---

<sup>3</sup> Fraser Watts, *Theology and Psychology* (London: Ashgate, 2002), p. 151.

<sup>4</sup> The complex relationship between these has been extensively considered across several disciplines, and has generated vast literatures, but for a recent, insightful theological discussions of rationality, faith and the 'passions', informed by other disciplines see the entire special edition of *Modern Theology* 27.2 (2011). This includes a useful discussion of the recent genealogy of the concept of emotion, Thomas Dixon 'Revolting Passions' *Modern Theology* 27.2 (2011), 298-312.

is it possible that they can be reconciled and combined in a way akin to ‘walking in the mountains’? By way of approach however, we will first briefly consider some other apparent conceptual and methodological dichotomies in theology and ask how they can be resolved or at least might be reconciled.

#### From theological dichotomies to modes of knowing

In the last chapter of his monograph *Theology and Psychology*, Watts argues forcibly that ‘Theology is continually beset by pressures towards sharp antitheses and over-strong dichotomies: something is said to be this *or* that’.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, as he points out, ‘it is often assumed that ‘this’ and ‘that’ are mutually incompatible and that there can be no relationship between them’.<sup>6</sup> This does not mean, of course, that conceptual distinctions are unhelpful, but that distinctions ‘only become dichotomies if it is assumed that the things distinguished are unrelated to each other, sharply contrasting and incompatible’.<sup>7</sup> Citing Coleridge’s famous dictum ‘It is a dull and obtuse mind that must divide in order to distinguish, but it is a still worse, that distinguishes in order to divide’,<sup>8</sup> Watts maintains that the consequences of thinking dichotomously in theology ‘are pernicious, both theoretically and practically’.<sup>9</sup>

To support his claim Watts reflects on three broad ways in which dichotomous thinking appears in theology the first of which concerns us here. This is the ‘the over-sharp distinction between self and world, between knower and what is known, and between the

---

<sup>5</sup> Watts, *Theology and Psychology*, p. 151.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

subjective and the objective'.<sup>10</sup> Referring to the changing connotations of the terms 'subjective; and 'objective' after the Enlightenment, from the earlier 'subjective' meaning 'existing in itself' to the later 'existing in human consciousness',<sup>11</sup> Watts quickly establishes a link between these changes and 'the radical rethinking of the nature of objectivity and subjectivity that occurred in the early modern period with the dawn of 'onlooker' or 'spectorial' consciousness'.<sup>12</sup> He then moves from this to what is seen by some as the sharp stand-off between overly rationalistic, propositional modes of religious thinking, which he equates with certain types of natural theology, and overly faith based, experiential or 'fideistic' ones. For Watts then, as for others, the subjective-objective dichotomy maps readily onto the faith-reason one: 'Fideism shared with the over rational approach to religion of the Enlightenment too strong a dichotomy between the objective and the subjective. It is central to the present task of healing the inheritance from modernity that this unnecessary dichotomy should be overcome.'<sup>13</sup>

I share Watts' opinion of the general tendency to dichotomise in theology and agree that the rigid subjective-objective dichotomy has been unhelpful.<sup>14</sup> I concur too that 'it is surprising, given the strength of theological interest in the grounds of religious belief, that theology has not shown a comparable interest [comparable to its interest in philosophical epistemology] in the psychology of cognition' and that this can prove helpful in healing the split.<sup>15</sup> But I will diverge from the route he takes in several ways,<sup>16</sup> of which the last is the

---

<sup>10</sup> Watts, *Theology and Psychology*, p. 152.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> See also Velmans *Understanding Consciousness*, pp. 169-192.

<sup>15</sup> Watts, *Theology and Psychology*, p. 152, parenthetical material added.

<sup>16</sup> Watts understandably treats cognitive psychology as 'the counterpart of philosophical epistemology' (p. 152) and while he is broadly right to do, as I argued earlier it is possible to draw out some ontological

most important. My major course change is that I wish to challenge his assumption that the subjective-objective dichotomy is the prime target here, or at least I wish to avoid aiming directly at it. Similarly, I will not be *directly* inspecting the relation between faith and reason,<sup>17</sup> reason and emotion,<sup>18</sup> or rationality and imagination<sup>19</sup>, though inevitably these will be partially considered too. Instead, I suggest as a working hypothesis at this point, that there is a more fruitful and encompassing distinction, one which partially overlaps with but in the end illuminates and organises all these supposed distinctions, as well as connects with that which was opened in the last chapter between experiential-narrative and analytic approaches in theology. This in turn I suggest is related but not reducible to the distinction between living and reflecting, or the pre-reflexive and reflexive modes of engagement with the world and with God.<sup>20</sup>

---

consequences from some contemporary psychology, its general ontological opacity notwithstanding. Watts for the most part adopts a liberal-compatibilist position with respect to psychology- theology relationships while I favour a more nuanced relationship in which psychology's assistance as an *ancilla* is subjected to overall theological governance and qualification. It is possible that Watts' views are partially a product of his overall (modern) tendency to focus on epistemology rather than ontology and to see theological anthropology as the beneficiary of converging *epistemologies*, theological, philosophical and psychological. By focussing on cognitive psychology, Watts also has a tendency to locate religious knowing within the individual, and to downplay social-cultural factors, whereas I put more emphasis on the idea that the cultural is critically important in shaping and selecting which cognitive mechanisms and modes are called into play. This is a matter of balance. In fairness, earlier in his monograph, Watts treats religious experience from social-constructivist as well as cognitive neuro-scientific perspectives. He is clearly aware of both but often gravitates toward the cognitive.

<sup>17</sup> There is a voluminous literature on this topic. For a rich collection of sources see Paul Helm (ed.), *Faith and Reason* (Oxford: OUP, 1999).

<sup>18</sup> See for example, the useful introduction by Sarah Coakley, 'Introduction: Faith, Rationality and the Passions', *Modern Theology* 27.2 (2011), pp. 217-225, as well as the entire issue.

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, Andrew Davison (ed.), *Imaginative Apologetics*, especially pp.29-78.

<sup>20</sup> It is worth emphasising that I am *not* suggesting there is a simple isomorphism between the pre-reflexive mode and narrative approach to theology, and the reflexive mode and more analytic theology. Both theological methods are reflexive, even though one, the narrative, may well depend *more* on lived experience than the other. Both are attempts to render explicit what is felt or implicitly meaningful. They are both, therefore, ultimately parasitic on primary religious engagement. Rather I am suggesting that attempts to reconcile apparently discontinuous theological approaches might usefully draw inspiration from the experience-reflection dynamic, thereby using it as a metaphor.

## Living and Reflecting

At the risk of tiring the reader, then, the distinction which we are beginning to explore concerns the differences and relation between experiential engagement with the world, and by extension religious realities, and our ability subsequently to reflect or re-present our understanding of them. The basic difference and at least certain aspects of their dynamic relation are well captured by Wordsworth's famous 'recollections in tranquillity'.<sup>21</sup> In poems such as *Tintern Abbey* and *Intimations of Immortality From Recollections of Early Childhood*, Wordsworth time and again relives his early, direct, fully engaged experiences with the world:

There was a time when meadow, grove and stream,  
The earth and every common sight,  
To me did seem  
Apparelled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

Only to find now a sense of loss of immediacy as the attempt to reinstate the first order experience disappoints:

It is not now as it hath been of yore; --  
Turn wheresoe'er I may,  
By night or day,  
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

---

<sup>21</sup> My reasons for using Wordsworth here are, first, to provide the reader with a more direct, intuitive understanding of the issues I am exploring, but also for the more principled reasons stated earlier that I agree with Milbank that Wordsworth *par excellence* demonstrates the importance of the 'feeling-intellect' which is essential for any serious religious or theological sensibility, and, as I shall argue, his grasp of the pre-reflexive/reflexive dynamic. In a talk (and forthcoming paper) which is a partial philosophical complement of this thesis, John Cottingham, also citing Wordsworth, helpfully focusses on the primary engagement of religious thought and language arguing that 'the special theology of faith and grace builds on the ordinary natural responses that are already at work in our experience of the natural and human world. So there is a link between the natural and the supernatural light, a bridge between the workings of nature and of grace, which together have the power to guide us home to our ultimate source and end', John Cottingham, 'Confronting the Cosmos: Scientific Rationality and Human Understanding', Talk given at the Ian Ramsey Research Centre, University of Oxford, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012 and personal email communication, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012. See also Cottingham, *The Spiritual Dimension*, especially pp. 5-13, 134-139.

But then, in the same poem, but written after a two year interval, the poet reflects maturely that there is still 'something that doth live, /that nature yet remembers/what was so fugitive!' For Wordsworth the recollection of the past is precious since it 'doth breed/ a perpetual benediction' and it can become 'the fountain light of all our day'. Such moments, he adds, 'are yet a master-light of all our seeing'. (They) 'uphold us, cherish, and have power to make/ our noisy years seem moments in the being/ of the eternal Silence'. He concludes,

Hence in a season of calm weather  
Though inland far we be,  
Our Souls have sight of that Immortal sea  
Which brought us hither,  
Can in a moment travel thither,  
And see the Children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling ever more.<sup>22</sup>

The poet lived where all was once 'Apparelled in celestial light' but finds '...things which I have seen I now can see no more'. Yet in the 'embers' of his 'shadowy' recollections discovers the 'master-light of all our seeing', which though far from the 'Immortal sea' allows us in a trice to 'travel thither'. So that, with a critical, *double*-reflexive turn we shall explore later, the memory of the original, itself a reflection, is repristinated and refreshed by the intervening reflection.

Moreover, in seeing Tintern Abbey again, the poet cannot and does not wish any longer to recreate the immediacy of the original appetitive experience since he has learned to see it in a deeper way:

---

<sup>22</sup> Wordsworth, *Intimations of Immortality*, op. cit.



I cannot paint  
 What then I was. The sounding cataract  
 Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,  
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
 Their colours and their forms, were then to me  
 An appetite, a feeling and a love,  
 That had no need of a remoter charm  
 By thought supplied, nor any interest  
 Unborrowed from the eye. –

But now, he regrets, 'That time is past/ And all its aching joys are no more, / And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this Faint I, nor mourn, nor murmur;/'

For I have learned  
 To look on nature, not as in the hour  
 Of thoughtless youth;  
 . . .  
 And I have felt  
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
 Of something far more deeply interfused  
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
 And the round ocean and the living air,  
 And the blue sky, and the mind of man...<sup>23</sup>

No longer looking with the 'eye of thoughtless youth', Wordsworth now 'feels' a disturbing resonance 'with the joy of elevated thoughts', he senses 'something far more deeply interfused', which indwells everything.<sup>24</sup>

My claims here are that this simple distinction,<sup>25</sup> between the lived, experienced event (or in this case an attempt at its re-creation) and the subsequent reflection on it can itself a) be *non-reductively* grounded in and further understood through recent debates in

---

<sup>23</sup> Wordsworth, *Tintern Abbey*, op. cit.

<sup>24</sup> See also Milbank, 'Foreward: An apologia for apologetics', in Davison (ed.), *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy and the Catholic Tradition*, xxii-xxii.

<sup>25</sup> Of course there is much more to be said of Wordsworth than this double reflective turn, not least his profound sense of anamnesis 'Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting' in 'Intimations' for example, the question of the depth of his understanding of transcendence, and hence his possible sense of participation - rather than pantheism as is so often claimed - but I wish here and elsewhere simply to press him into service as an example. He has after all been a powerful influence on the English Anglican religious tradition, see for example Milbank, 'Foreward', *Imaginative Apologetics*, p. xxii.

cognitive science and culture, b) that this *is* a distinction and not dichotomy, since the subsequent *relation*, between the post-event reflection and the revisiting of the event anew, can help show how apparently disparate ways of thinking can be brought together, (and that a further interesting issue which we can but note here is whether there is an additional *tertium quid*, the ‘imagination’ which can help unite the two, or whether the unity is achieved through intrinsic dynamics that are themselves imaginative),<sup>26</sup> c) the distinction can be related to cultural and intellectual trends, d) that the distinction and relationship be used to reinterpret as distinctions what might otherwise seem to be dichotomies in religious and theological knowing.

To understand a, b and c further we now consider the approach taken by Iain McGilchrist’s, in his seminal work, *The Master and his Emissary*, then reflect on its relevance for theological knowing in the concluding part of this chapter.

#### Modes of Knowing in *The Master and His Emissary*

McGilchrist’s excellent work defies easy summary for it is at once an intelligent synthesis of the voluminous and complex literature on the cognitive neuroscience of inter hemispheric differences in function, an identification of two, characteristically human, ways of knowing and a serious and wide ranging attempt to relate these to cultural, intellectual and artistic movements during the course of Western history. McGilchrist’s core thesis can be stated in a series of bald propositions, though to do so seriously risks underselling its richness:

---

<sup>26</sup> This implies a shift from faculty to process understanding. Think of imaginative activity, or imaginative potential, not imagination as a structure, entity or additional faculty.

First, differences in modes of relating to the world can be identified and related to psychological activities which depend differentially, though not exclusively, on the activity of one or other cerebral hemisphere for their realisation. Despite the many banalities of much of the interpretative literature in this field, and its bowdlerisations over the years,<sup>27</sup> it is, McGilchrist claims, still worthwhile explore differences between the *modes* in which different parts of the brain, the right and left cerebral hemispheres, underpin meaningfully different *ways of being* in the world.<sup>28</sup>

Second, *in nuce*, activities which rely more on the right cerebral hemisphere are generally synthetic, and involve our lived, experiential, episodic, embodied, affect-rich engagements with the world, each other and ourselves, while left hemisphere activities, typically more analytic, involve the second order, 're-presentations' of these experiences, which allow us to think about, manipulate, analyse, and 'objectify' (in the sense of treating as objects) the discoveries of the right hemisphere.<sup>29</sup> In addition, for McGilchrist, our direct engagement with the world is one of 'responsive evocation' in which (o)ur attention is responsive to the world, but the world is responsive to our attention'. Thus, bridging the subjective-objective divide, McGilchrist argues, for example, that the 'greenness, or greyness or, or stoniness lies not in the mountain or in my mind, but from *between* us,

---

<sup>27</sup> McGilchrist disarms the sceptical reader early in his monograph: 'Despite the recognition that the idea has been hijacked by everyone from management trainers to advertising copywriters, a number of the most knowledgeable people in the field have been unable to escape the conclusion that there is something profound here that requires explanation'. McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 2. He is right.

<sup>28</sup> 'I am not interested purely in 'functions' but in ways of being...' , McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, pp. 3-4

<sup>29</sup> It is worth mentioning that there are other axes and distinctions in cognitive neuroscience of potential interest to the theologian. One such, the distinction between and possibility for reconciliation of direct/ realist and constructivist theories of perception.....In a few years philosophers of mind may well spot this!

called forth from each and equally dependent on both'.<sup>30</sup> McGilchrist summarises the differences in the experiential outcomes rendered by the two hemispheres thus:

'If one had to encapsulate the principal differences in the experience mediated by the two hemispheres, their two modes of being, one could put it like this. The world of the left hemisphere, dependent on denotative language and abstraction, yields clarity and power to manipulate things that are known, fixed, static, isolated, decontextualized, explicit, disembodied, general in nature, but ultimately lifeless. The right hemisphere, by contrast, yields a world of individual, changing, evolving, interconnecting, implicit, incarnate living beings within the context of the lived world, but in the nature of things never fully graspable, always imperfectly known – and to this world it exists in a relationship of care.'<sup>31</sup>

And these products in turn result from the two basic modes of knowing we have at our disposal:

The knowledge that is mediated by the left hemisphere is knowledge within a closed system. It has the advantage of perfection, but such perfection is ultimately at the price of emptiness, of self-reference. It can mediate knowledge only in terms of a mechanical rearrangement of other things already known. It can never really 'break out' to know anything new, because its knowledge is of its own re-presentations only. Where the thing itself is 'present' to the right hemisphere, it is only re-presented by the left hemisphere, now becomes an idea of a thing. Where the right hemisphere is conscious of the Other, whatever it may be, the left hemisphere's consciousness is of itself.'<sup>32</sup>

What is clear from this summary is the contrast between lived-experience and the re-presented, the first and second hand engagements. What McGilchrist does not capture here is the wealth of other differences he reviews including the handing of space and time, to which it is worth drawing attention. Briefly, neuropsychological evidence suggests that whereas 'the right hemisphere represents objects as having volume and depth in space....the left hemisphere tends to represent the visual world schematically, abstractly,

---

<sup>30</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*, p. 134 emphasis added.

<sup>31</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*, p. 174.

<sup>32</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*, pp. 174-5. I have quoted at length as I recommend that the reader refer back to this section as required as a useful and important overview.

geometrically, with a lack of realistic detail and even in one plane.<sup>33</sup> (At this point the reader may wish to recall think of the view from the 110<sup>th</sup> floor and ‘walking in the mountains’). As for time, this is typically handled far better by the right hemisphere; ‘virtually all aspects of the appreciation of time, in the sense of something lived through, with a past, present and future are dependent on the right hemisphere...’<sup>34</sup>

Now are we saying here any more than that humans can think spatial and temporal thoughts? What is important to note, I suggest, is the *constellation* of cognitions, affects and meanings that seem to cohere. So, we don’t think merely spatially or temporally but we often seek after *truth*, spatially, and abstractly and dispassionately and at the same time, in contrast with thinking temporally, contextually and in an engaged, *meaningful* and caring manner. To risk a very crude caricature, if the left hemisphere is Cartesian in its analytic spatialisation, the right is Heideggerian in its lived temporality and, intriguingly for de Certeau perhaps, it has a well attested skill in *following a narrative*, a skill which is not shared as fully by the left side.<sup>35</sup>

Third, each way of being or attending is of ‘ultimate importance’ in ‘bringing about the recognisably human world’.<sup>36</sup> This is an important point. Humans have developed both to be directly responsive and engaged with the world *and* to manipulate and reflect on it. McGilchrist’s long and detailed explication implicates the emergence of intelligent tool use and language here, but the ‘take home’ message is that neither mode of knowing alone,

---

<sup>33</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary* p. 78.

<sup>34</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary* p. 76.

<sup>35</sup> The specialisation for narrative understanding is important here, see p. 76. The simple philosophical caricature is too crude, however, and should not be taken literally. That said, McGilchrist himself shows a deep appreciation of Heidegger’s thought, *inter alia* he writes: ‘According to Heidegger, ‘care’ is only possible within temporality, in which we are directed towards our own future, and that of others who share our mortality, a care which is grounded in a coherent past.’ McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*, p. 397

<sup>36</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*, p. 3.

neither directly engaged nor re-presented, is sufficient on its own, *both together* are required. At best there is a dynamic which relates the two ways of knowing. What is this dynamic? Again, the answer to this question could be long and complex, but in the interests of brevity, the claim is that there what McGilchrist styles a 'right-left-right' dynamic, where the world is first experienced in a direct (right hemisphere, pre-reflexive) manner, then reflected on (by the left 're-presentation'), then the results of such reflections are 'given' back to the direct experience enriching and further in-forming it.

For shorthand, and to connect with a poetic passage frequently quoted by theologians but rarely fully explored, from T.S. Eliot's poem and given at the start of this chapter, *The Waste Land*, I shall refer to this dynamic as the 'Little Gidding Turn' (LGT).<sup>37</sup> In the last of the *Four Quartets* Eliot writes,

And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

Save that we don't quite 'know it for the first time' but do so, of course, at best, with the benefit of our exploration and explication following repeated LGTs. In an important passage, McGilchrist describes the dynamic<sup>38</sup> between the two modes of knowing (in neuroscientific terms) as follows:

...it is essential that what the left hemisphere yields is returned to the right hemisphere, where it can once again live. Only the right hemisphere is in touch with primary experience, with life, and the left hemisphere can only ever be a

---

<sup>37</sup> This particular passage is almost clichéd in theological writing.....

<sup>38</sup> The reader may wish to experience this dynamic for themselves by reading again the Wordsworth poetry quoted earlier in this chapter and reflecting on this in terms of the LGT. Indeed with the knowledge of McGilchrist's account other parts of other Wordsworth poems take on a different complexion. See *The Prelude* Book 2, ll. 203-219 where Wordsworth chides the analytic sensibility 'But who shall parcel out / His intellect by geometrical rules,...No officious slave art though of that false *secondary* power/ By which we multiply distinctions, then/ Deem that our puny boundaries are things/ That we perceive, and not that we have made.' Emphasis added to remind the reader of the primacy of the master and its secondary *emissary*.

staging post...not the final destination. The right hemisphere certainly needs the left, but the left hemisphere depends upon the right. Much that marks us out, in the positive sense as well as the negative sense, as human beings, requires the intervention of the left hemisphere, *as long as it is acting in concert with the right hemisphere*. Important human faculties depend on a synthesis of their activity. In the absence of such concerted action the left hemisphere come to believe its territory actually is the world.<sup>39</sup>

In practice, however, such 'concerted' action does not always occur, which brings us to our fourth point.

Culture and its products, McGilchrist maintains, depend *in part* at least on intellectual manifestations of both modes of knowing, with key times in intellectual and cultural history when one mode, often the left-hemisphere, the re-presentational, gains the upper hand. So, for example, McGilchrist identifies movements such as the Reformation, the Enlightenment, modernism, and postmodernism as characterised by an excessive concern with the analytic, the dispassionate, the ahistorical, the literal – all left hemisphere dependent. In the past, movements such as these have been balanced or at least moderated by the counter reaction of lived and experiential forces (associated with the right hemisphere). So, in this sense, Romanticism is typically seen as a response in part to the rationalism of the Enlightenment, and, likewise, aspects of the Renaissance as a response to late mediaeval scholasticism and the Reformation. With the rise of scientific techno-rationalism, and we might add, bureaucratic managerialism, modernity and more recently post modernity, we may, according to McGilchrist be in a time of 'runaway left hemisphere' re-presentationalism at much cost.<sup>40</sup> Arguably, McGilchrist's overall thesis could be said to be overstated. Culture, as he himself recognises, has its own dynamic and complex intellectual movements such as these are affected by a host of factors as well as

---

<sup>39</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*, p. 219, emphasis in original.

<sup>40</sup> But art and religion may be our saviours, see McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*, pp. 445-459.

the psychological. That said, the explanatory power of two ways of knowing, the one direct and experiential, the other re-presentational and detached is certainly worth noting.

Before proceeding further, and further to the partial dependence of culture on cognition, it is important to emphasise forcibly what McGilchrist's thesis is *not*. There can sometimes be a tendency, especially and regrettably in theological circles, to kneejerk to the term 'neuroscience' and assume that this inevitably commits us to a crude physicalist and generally reductive account.<sup>41</sup> This is *certainly* not true of McGilchrist's treatment, nor need it be true in general, though his account can be construed as naturalist as we can see. Well aware that there are knotty philosophical issues in the mind brain-body relationship – which serious neuroscientist is not – McGilchrist is at pains to point out that he is primarily discussing modes of attending to and experiencing the world. Defending his initial focus on functional neuroanatomy, however, he writes: 'I should emphasise that, although I begin by looking at brain structure in relation to the neuropsychological functions that we know are associated with each hemisphere, *my aim is purely to illuminate aspects of our experience*'.<sup>42</sup> Later on, writing explicitly of the reductive pitfalls of mechanistic models, he adds, 'I want to stand back a bit from the question of 'functions' ...the supposedly 'machine-like' hemispheres are performing and think of them instead more globally as having a disposition, or stance, toward the world – having a 'take' on it if you like'.<sup>43</sup> His own approach neatly incorporates safeguards against reductionism by stressing 'the right hemisphere's passionate commitment to the sheer quiddity of each individual thing, through which we alone approach the universal, and its resistance to the reductionism

---

<sup>41</sup> Even sophisticated theologians can be understandably wary, but see the useful comments of Coakley, 'Faith, Rationality and the Passions', pp. 219, 222-223.

<sup>42</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 7, (emphasis added).

<sup>43</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 98.



inevitable in the system building of the left hemisphere'.<sup>44</sup> Distancing his own 'take' from the emergence of early, positivist, scientific materialism and downplaying of imagination he critiques it: 'Gone was the understanding of the complex, often paradoxical nature of reality, an acceptance of the *conunctio oppositorum*: we were back to the realm of 'either/or'...This philosophy, known as materialism, was explicitly based on a view that science is the only foundation for knowing and understanding the world.'<sup>45</sup> 'The knowing superiority of reductionism is also clear in modern scientific discourse' (but) 'it has a corrosive effect on higher values, inducing a sort of easy cynicism, and encouraging a mechanistic view of the human.'<sup>46</sup> But science is worth heeding, even though its models may be provisional. It can serve as a rich new source of theological analogies and these, after all, should never be treated as univocally true. In the revealing final lines of his book, McGilchrist helpfully shows his hand:

'...the fact that the brain is divided into two relatively independent chunks which just happen broadly to mirror the very dichotomies that are being pointed to – alienation versus engagement, abstraction versus incarnation, the categorical versus the unique, the general versus the particular, the part versus the whole and so on –it seems like a metaphor that might have some literal truth. But if it turns out to be 'just' a metaphor, I will be content. I have a high regard for metaphor. It is how we come to understand the world.'<sup>47</sup>

McGilchrist is no reductionist and his thesis should not be so read, but he has a good understanding of and a healthy respect for science.<sup>48</sup> And this is the basis on which I shall

---

<sup>44</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 157.

<sup>45</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 382.

<sup>46</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 424.

<sup>47</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 462. And for further evidence, McGilchrist himself: <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/master-and-his-emissary-divided-brain-and-making-western-world-10-feb-2011-audio>

<sup>48</sup> That said, I fear that some in the theological guild may still be wary of any 'brain-talk', preferring instead to ally themselves with varieties of neo-dualism. To them I can only say that the assumption that the realms of mind and matter bifurcate sits less easily with a participatory ontology, or indeed, certain interpretations of the belief that the 'Word became flesh'.

now proceed: thinking, relying primarily on direct engagement or on its re-presentation, are indeed key ways we come to understand the world.

### From modes of knowing to theological distinctions

If what we often experience in theology are a series of dichotomies, how do some of these look following our reflection on modes of knowing?<sup>49</sup>

In what follows I shall first consider a supposed theological dichotomy that is easily rendered otiose by McGilchrist's scheme, next I shall consider a more nuanced distinction but one which I am suggesting can be overstated, finally I consider two examples of what I consider to be effective use of cognitive modes in theological knowing. All of these dichotomies and distinctions, I suggest can be seen as examples of more or less reliance or balanced dependence on engaged versus re-presented modes of knowing and therefore to privilege pre-reflexive or reflexive knowing, faith or reason, and meaning or truth, or, more positively, to point to ways in which these can be reconciled.

The first and easily deconstructed dichotomy is one outlined by George Lindbeck in his much discussed monograph *The Nature of Doctrine*.<sup>50</sup> In Chapter 1 Lindbeck compares and contrasts so called 'propositional' and 'experiential-expressive' theories of religion and doctrine. The first of these 'emphasises the cognitive aspects of religion and stresses the ways in which church doctrines function as informative propositions or truth claims about objective realities'.<sup>51</sup> By contrast, the second approach 'the "experiential-expressive" dimension of religion...interprets doctrines as noninformative and nondiscursive symbols of

---

<sup>49</sup> The ironic (and recursive) reflexivity of this argument strategy will not have escaped the reader!

<sup>50</sup> Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, op. cit. I am not engaging here with wider criticisms of Lindbeck's position.

<sup>51</sup> Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, p. 16

inner feelings, attitudes or existential orientations'.<sup>52</sup> For Lindbeck the relative stances of these approaches to meaning and truth differ. Whereas for the propositionalist 'if a doctrine is true, it is always true, and if it is false it is always false'....for experiential-expressive symbolists...religiously significant meanings can vary while doctrines remain the same, and, conversely, doctrines can alter without change of meaning'.<sup>53</sup> Truth and meaning, at least from one perspective are dissociated.

It is not hard to see connection with what we have been discussing. Existential meaning and propositional truth, according to McGilchrist, load differentially on lived-engaged versus re-presented knowing, the one is closer to the emotional and expressive 'right-hemisphere', the other to detached, second order, 'left-hemisphere' thinking. Lindbeck's separation of these ways of religious knowing can thus be seen as neatly carving the chicken at its joints! It effectively dichotomises two psychological modes which normally act in concert. Admittedly, Lindbeck acknowledges a third option 'favored especially by ecumenically inclined Roman Catholics'<sup>54</sup> which attempts to combine the two but effectively 'subsumes' this under one or other of the two approaches allowing him rapidly to side line it in favour of his cultural-linguistic alternative. From our present perspective, however, Lindbeck's dichotomy is not inevitable, and can be resolved without backing off into the purely socially constructed or 'cultural-linguistic'. Both truth and meaning are involved in religious knowing, the existential-expressive and truth-seeking/detached modes are both required, and are mutually informative.

---

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>54</sup> Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, p. 16.

A second and in some ways more important contemporary dichotomy in religious and theological thinking and indeed more widely in secularity as a whole has been outlined by the Radical Orthodoxy group. By paying careful attention to the genealogy of theological concepts, and following the earlier work of de Lubac and others, John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, Rudi te Velde and others have recovered the ideas of a participatory and analogical ontology in contrast to a post-Scotist univocal one. 'Participation' implies that creation or being, in all its ontological aspects, owes its existence to God who is utterly different from creation yet completely intimate with it. Because of this, only analogical predication is possible in talk about God, from creation to God, in the case of ordinary descriptors, God is 'father', 'rock', 'refuge' for example, and from God to creation in the case of 'perfection' terms, 'good', 'wise', 'just' and so on. The doctrine of participation, fed by Hellenistic as well as Biblical thought, suggests that we have 'being on loan' from the God in whom we 'live and move and have our being'.<sup>55</sup> RO scholarship charts the alternative rise of a univocal ontology in which, *inter alia*, God effectively becomes a being among beings and is seen as infinitely 'distant from' creation, and thereby separate from it. Pickstock in particular has implicated the emergence of post-Cartesian 'spatialised' or 'representational' thinking as adding further impetus to non-participatory ontologies and furthering the illusion of separation of the knower from the known and the (fruitless) search for the 'God's eye view'.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> For a useful and clear account of analogy and participation see John Milbank and Simon Oliver, *The Radical Orthodoxy Reader* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 13-24. Janet Martin Soskice, 'Naming God in Philo, Augustine and Aquinas', 7<sup>th</sup> Aquinas Colloquium, Blackfriars Oxford, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2012, has strongly defended the Judaic roots of such analogical and apophatic discussions of God. See also Rudi te Velde, *Participation and Substantiality in Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

<sup>56</sup> Pickstock, *After Writing*, pp. 47-100. John Milbank more broadly contrasts the rise of 'rationalist'-Scotist over 'participatory'-Proclean genealogies as the precursor modern representationalism, Milbank, *The Radical Orthodoxy Reader*, pp. 379-387.

Where does this thinking fit with respect to McGilchrist's views? In fact, as we have already seen Pickstock was influenced in her discussion of representationalism by de Certeau's work which we discussed in the last chapter, as well as the French philosopher Boulnois.<sup>57</sup> If the current argument holds that de Certeau's separation of the lived and re-presented is an important distinction but not an inevitable one, and if McGilchrist is correct in pointing to the interdependence, at best, of these ways of knowing, does this have implications for the force and range of the RO critique of representationalism? I think so. The issue is not that the RO critique of representationalism is wrong per se, but that it can too easily be overstated, or misunderstood and taken to mean that humans do not think using re-presentations of existing cognitions. An exchange with Simon Oliver supports this conclusion. He writes,

I think representation only really becomes a problem when one has already lost the idea that knowledge is a participation in that which gives itself to be known. In so far as knowledge is always already interpreted, it's a representation of some kind. The question is, how can it be more than an arbitrary and therefore untrustworthy representation – more than an act of power over the grasped inert object, rather than a response to the gift of being from within being (i.e. we're within being in the sense of ourselves being created)? So, we have 'created being' knowing itself, but it can only do so with a participatory matrix in which being-itself is the guarantee of truth.<sup>58</sup>

The moral, as we shall see in more detail in the next chapter, is that participatory logic must apply to re-presented, reflexive as well to lived, pre-reflexive thinking, and as we have seen, the reflexive and pre-reflexive can be combined.

---

<sup>57</sup> Simon Oliver, personal email communication, 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2011.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

### *Effective use of modes in theological knowing*

I argued in the last chapter that stories spring initially from first-person, lived-experiential engagement with the world, and that more analytic overviews depend on more abstract representations. A recent approach to theology which argues for a rapprochement between analytic and narrative methods and, in terms of the present thesis is an example of ‘good’ combination of modes in theological knowing is that offered by Eleanore Stump in *Wandering in Darkness*.<sup>59</sup> Felt experience and reason are also implicated by John Milbank in his recent Stanton lectures.<sup>60</sup> Here and in commending what he terms ‘romantic orthodoxy’ he adverts to the role of the feeling-intellect, especially as it turns out as represented by the likes of Wordsworth.

Somewhat amusingly, however, Stump and Milbank arrive at a similar place but via different rhetorical appeals. In arguing for methodological complementarity Stump recommends the combination of ‘Dominican’ and ‘Franciscan’ theological sensibilities with the former standing as short hand for the analytic and the latter the experiential-narrative. Milbank, by contrast, argues forcibly against the Franciscan way of thinking in favour of the Dominican. What is going on here? Are these two treatments, Stump’s and Milbank’s, mutually incompatible? In fact Milbank is clearly arguing about *epistemic* developments stemming from aspects of the post-Scotist Franciscan turn to univocity, voluntarism, nominalism, and a loss of fine distinctions to do with causality,<sup>61</sup> but it is equally clear that,

---

<sup>59</sup> Eleanore Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering* (Oxford: OUP, 2010).

<sup>60</sup> John Milbank, ‘Philosophy: A Theological Critique’, Stanton Lectures, University of Cambridge, 2011, available via <http://theologyphilosophycentre.co.uk/2011/03/12/john-milbanks-stanton-lectures-2011/> accessed 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

<sup>61</sup> Milbank, ‘Immanence and Life’, Stanton Lecture 2, p.7.

like Stump, he acknowledges and values the complementarity of the 'spatialised overview' and the narrative when he suggests,

...that spatial matter is *not* simply subordinate to temporal mind: instead it would seem that the 'simultaneity' offered by space offers us a kind of holistic work of 'picturing' that time cannot achieve, however much it is equally true that space cannot achieve the synthesis of memory and expectation provided by narrative.<sup>62</sup>

So, and in accord with McGilchrist, and thinking of the reflections in chapter 2, the re-presented overview, according to Milbank himself, gives us the topological picture of the epistemic relations, while the temporal supports the narrative. Equally, in terms of theological method, it would make sense to reject aspects of the Franciscan episteme while retaining its emphasis on lived particularity. Thus, Stump and Milbank can be reconciled!

## Conclusions

In this chapter I have outlined two basic modes of knowing: one lived, engaged and experiential, the other re-presented, 'spatialised' and more abstract. According to recent neuroscientific and cultural psychological work, both are important ways in which humans come to know their world but what is most crucial is that the two are held in a dynamic balance such that engaged ways of being are reflected on and re-presented and given back to enrich the original experience, either at the time or through memory and expectations. I argued, further, that certain apparent theological approaches can be seen to load differentially on one or other of these ways of knowing and are, by implication, not necessarily dichotomous. The chapter concluded with recent examples where the importance of both modes of thinking is

---

<sup>62</sup>Milbank, 'Immanence and Life', Stanton Lecture 2, p.20.

acknowledged. As Milbank, approving of Bergson points out, ‘the *way* we think rather than *what* we think gives us a clue to the nature of physical reality, then this suggests that the temporal and the spatial are always held in an equal balance’.<sup>63</sup> He concludes,

To avoid both immanent dualism and immanent hierarchical subordination we *require a transcendence* which suspends reality and keeps both time and space, both process and substantial stability in constant play. Without this play of relationality, there is no life, because life which is merely virtual becomes, as we have seen, either a void and dead (as with Deleuze) or else an inorganic and impersonal force because it is one of absolute realised unity (as with Bergson) supposedly ‘superior’ to merely living individuals, who are by comparison relatively ‘dead’.<sup>64</sup>

In the next chapter we consider the appeal to this sense of transcendence in more detail.

---

<sup>63</sup> Milbank, ‘Immanence and Life’, Stanton Lecture 2, p. 20.

<sup>64</sup> Milbank, ‘Immanence and Life’, Stanton Lecture 2, p. 24, emphasis added.



## Chapter 4

### Manners of Knowing: Deploying a Theological Grammar

*Imagination having been our theme  
So also hath that intellectual Love,  
For they are each in each and cannot stand  
Dividually...*

*Wordsworth, The Prelude, Book XIV, lines 206-209*

In the last chapter we identified two psychologically and culturally significant modes of knowing, one engaged, experiential and pre-reflexive, the other more detached, less affect laden and reflexive and considered the need for their interaction akin to ‘walking in the mountains’. A second and equally important focus for this thesis, however, is the *manner* of knowing where we take manner to refer to knowledge or knowing with moral or theological valence. Knowing and gaining knowledge are instances of human actions and make use of normal psychological processes. But like all actions, human intellectual acts of a voluntary sort can aim for the Good (the True and the Beautiful) or, misguidedly, for some lesser or penultimate good. Certain ways or manners of knowing, certain ways of going about the process of gaining knowledge, and for what purpose, are, therefore, morally and spiritually speaking, likely to be more or less superior to others.<sup>1</sup> This will be true for knowing that is

---

<sup>1</sup> In so far as intellectual acts involve desires and the will, the intellectual appetites, they have moral dimensions, but this is not always recognised. As Coakley writes referring to Dixon: ‘the “main casualty” in this new semantic transformation to a “secular, scientific, and sterilised” idea of emotion” was the older sense of the cognitive and moral *seriousness* of the affective life which had attended the traditional discussion of the “passions”’ Sarah Coakley, ‘Introduction: Faith, Rationality and the Passions’, *Modern Theology* 27.2 (2011), p 221.

not explicitly religious as well as that which is involved in religion and theology, though we might expect important issues to be highlighted in the latter two.<sup>2</sup>

Such issues now include what are the theologically significant manners of knowing, and whether certain modes of knowing are also intrinsically inappropriate manners? That is whether certain ways of engaging (psychologically) with reality are necessarily and inevitably more flawed than others, or even morally compromised. Put this latter way this begs the response that of course they are. How could certain ways of knowing not be better or worse than others? If I seek to know and do so in such a way that exploits my neighbour, perhaps I steal from them, extort, bully or threaten them into telling me what I want to know, or I seek to know regardless of the ultimate consequences of my knowledge, then obviously my knowing and coming to know are venal if not plain evil. But this is partly to miss the point, and to fail to distinguish clearly between modes and manners as these terms are used here. The question here is whether certain modes of knowing, certain psychologically 'natural' ways so to speak, are more morally or ethically suspect than others, or at least more prone to ethical imperfection. The first way of interpreting the question considers the extrinsic circumstances of the act of knowing, whether there are blocks to it which need to be overcome and whether in doing so there is a falling away from the Good, the True and the Beautiful. The second interpretation, and the one we shall consider first

---

<sup>2</sup> Religious knowing is a *special* case of general knowing. It is not only God supported, like all knowing, at best it is also *explicitly* God seeking. Hence we might expect a more complex or at least different relationship between its modes and manners than undifferentiated non-theological or non-religious knowing – at least when it is carried out faithfully and lovingly. There is a danger here, of course, that I will be accused of putting theologising on pedestal as a necessarily morally superior to other forms of knowing. This of course is self-evidently not the case. There will be situations where conscientious, honest and humble secular knowing is on target where theological endeavour is not. It is simply that theology affords a paradigmatic way of examining the elements of truth seeking because the process of theologising is clearly constrained by and answerable to its primary subject in a very obvious way that may become more submerged or implicit in secular knowing. Whether theology meets its own standards, and how far it inevitably falls short of its subject matter is quite another matter.

here, asks whether certain cognitive activities are *intrinsically* limited or flawed in and of themselves, and considers whether there is a direct relationship or mapping between modes and manners. Admittedly, from any theological perspective which affirms the basic goodness of all creation, it is hard to imagine why any *particular* psychological process, or mode of knowing, detached from its application, should be *intrinsically* more ‘evil’ than another, but it may be that certain modes afford more potential for moral imperfection on the grounds that they permit a more powerful purchase or ‘manipulation’ of reality and this can be for the greater good or ill.

How best can we understand these issues? At stake here, I suggest, is the idea of a ‘theological grammar’ which properly orders psychological activities. By grammar I mean a way of construing the meaning and purposes of acts of human knowing and the intentions behind them such that we can say that such and such an act is theologically well formed as opposed to such and such an act being theologically misshapen. I am using ‘grammar’ here in the sense of a theological semantics deployed to organise psychological categories. My usage is closer to Newman’s implicit use in *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, or St Thomas in the *Summa* when discussing the powers of the soul, rather than grammar understood simply as the organising principle for well-formed religious language *about God*. To such a psycho-theological grammar we now turn.

### *Curiositas and studiositas*

In his excellent, meditative monograph, *Intellectual Appetite: A Theological Grammar*, Paul Griffiths carefully delineates two theologically significant manners of knowing, or engaging the intellectual appetite, both well known to the premodern Christian tradition, *curiositas*

and *studiositas*. These he defines as follows using their modern idioms. Again, we need his full definitions as a reference point:

Curiosity is a particular appetite, which is to say a particular ordering of the affections, or, more succinctly, a particular intentional love. Its object, what it wants, is new knowledge, a previously unexperienced reflexive intimacy with some creature. And what it seeks to do with that knowledge is control, dominate, or make a private possession of it. Curiosity is, then, in brief, *appetite for ownership of new knowledge*, and its principal method is enclosure by sequestration of particular creatures or ensembles of such.<sup>3</sup>

Griffiths then elaborates this and describes the effect on the knower:

The curious want to know what they do not yet know, and they often want to know it *ardentissimo appetitu*, with supremely ardent appetite. But the appetite for new knowledge that belongs to them ravishes them: they are violated and dragged away, with full consent and eager cooperation, by what is likely to seem to them a noble desire for *nihil aliud quam scire*, nothing other than to know the *incognita*.<sup>4</sup>

He then contrasts such a manner with studiousness, which,

...like curiosity, is a particular love, a specific ordering of the affections. And like curiosity it has knowledge as its object, which it seeks. But the studious do not seek to sequester, own, possess, or dominate what they hope to know; they want instead, to participate lovingly in it, to respond to it knowingly as gift rather than as potential possession, to treat it as icon rather than spectacle. A preliminary definition of studiousness, then, is: *appetite for closer reflexive intimacy with the gift*. The appetite of the studious may rival that of the curious in ardour; but the former, unlike the latter, treat what they seek to know as iconic gift and thereby open to and participatory in the giver.<sup>5</sup>

He continues:

Objects of knowledge so understood can be loved and contemplated, but they cannot be dominated by sequestration. The studious therefore seek a peculiar reflexive intimacy with what they want to know, and they seek it with the understanding that they, as knowers, have creaturely participation in the giver in common with what they want know. This understanding carries with it another,

---

<sup>3</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, pp. 20, emphases in original.

<sup>4</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, pp. 21.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, emphases in original.

which is that this commonality makes cognitive intimacy possible. And the studios are committed to treating the intellectual commons as indeed common, and not as a field of conquest, a set of objects to be sequestered.<sup>6</sup>

It is helpful to flesh out the distinction between *studiositas* and *curiositas* a little more before considering how these manners interact with the two modes we examined earlier. At issue here are the categories of gift, participation, appetite, ownership and icon. Griffiths elaborates the notion of studios knowing as that which takes within an economy of gift rather than an economy of obligation.<sup>7</sup> In such an economy those who 'accept a transfer ... of gift are, when they accept the gift as given, therefore, obliged to nothing'.<sup>8</sup> By contrast, in the more complex economy of obligation there are mutualities of 'debt, discharge, and calculation as well as goods transferred; in the former, there are only giver, gift and given'.<sup>9</sup>

How is such an economy of gift possible at all? After all, in strictly human (let alone, say, Marxist) terms it is hard to envisage this, so used are we to commodity exchange. Simply put, it is possible, indeed necessary, because from the point of view of a correctly catechised Christian ontology, all that can be experienced and known is gift, since all that is emanates from the supreme Giver. Or, more accurately, all creation, owes its very being and existence to its participation in the divine. And this is true of intellectual as well as sensible and material goods. Yet, given the imperfect or damaged nature of creation, in practice, as Griffiths reminds us, '(t)he world is radiantly translucent [but] ...also shot through with darkness',<sup>10</sup> and we effectively live in what we might call a mixed economy, in which pure gift is frequently obscured or eclipsed by possessiveness and the need to

---

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, pp. 50-74.

<sup>8</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 55.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 41.

control. In question here is the proper ordering of our desires or appetites. So what is appetite?

‘Appetite is a kind of wanting...[to] seek the presence of some absence’.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, ‘all appetites’, writes Griffiths, ‘seek not only the presence of some absence, but also that presence under some description, which is ordinarily, but not invariably, to say for some purpose.’<sup>12</sup> And that purpose can be participatory delight, or domination, power and ownership. The difference between these two sorts of appetites (the desires of the human to know) thus further illuminates the idea of knowledge as gift or possession, since appetites have either intimacy or mastery as their goals. Hence, appetites can, according to Griffiths, be ‘deformed by misprision of the object with which intimacy is sought as well as misprision of the appetitive seeker.’<sup>13</sup> He elaborates this: ‘Appetite’s deformation occurs when the depth and range of creaturely intimacy is overestimated by idolizing either the appetitive subject or that subject’s objects; or when damage’s opacity is underestimated’.<sup>14</sup> From a Christian perspective, however, both ‘subjects and objects share [the] fundamental property of being creaturely participants in God’.<sup>15</sup> Restful delight in the satisfied appetite, in presence over absence, and knowledge’s contemplation as icon, yet with depths still to be explored, are therefore the hallmarks and possibilities of well-formed Christian knowing.

---

<sup>11</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 94.

<sup>12</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 98.

<sup>13</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 119.

<sup>14</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 123.

<sup>15</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 117.

## Modes and manners related

Can we now use Griffiths's 'grammar' and its elaborations in terms of gift, participation, appetite, damage, ownership, and icon to order properly, in a theologically meaningful and purposive way, the categories of knowing outlined by McGilchrist and introduced in the last chapter? To caricature this somewhat, can the *lexicon* comprising the *modes* of knowing carefully detailed by McGilchrist, in its lived-experiential and re-presented variants, be organised by the *semantics* and *syntax* of the *manners* of knowing so studiously offered by Griffiths? Or again, can psychological, cognitive building blocks be architecturally structured by theologically principled, appetitive and intellectual categories? If so, we can address the question whether certain modes of knowing are inevitably inappropriate manners, or whether, as seems more likely, all modes of knowing can be used for good or for ill.

To explore this, we should return to the core of Griffiths' definitions: 'Curiosity is.... *appetite for ownership of new knowledge*, ....and its principal method is enclosure by sequestration'.<sup>16</sup> Studiositas by contrast 'is: *appetite for closer reflexive intimacy with the gift*. The appetite of the studious may rival that of the curious in ardour; but the former, unlike the latter, treat what they seek to know as iconic gift and thereby open to and participatory in the giver. Objects of knowledge so understood can be loved and contemplated, but they cannot be dominated by sequestration',<sup>17</sup> nor known exhaustively. Here, by contrast, the emphasis is on participatory, reflexive union with the gift, not the ownership or manipulation of the known.

---

<sup>16</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 20.

<sup>17</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 21. As Griffiths explains there are important limits on intimacy such that the studious tolerate the unknown.



I shall deal with the notion of new knowledge shortly but first consider the principle that one manner, *curiositas*, is associated with seeking control, manipulation, ownership and sequestration of knowledge, whereas the other, *studiositas* seeks 'intimate participation'. One possibility which immediately springs to mind, but one equally easily discounted, is that the direct-experienced mode of knowing is the psychological equivalent or underpinning of *studiositas* since it seemingly involves a dynamic participation in the known, whereas re-presentational, post-reflexive, 'manipulative' knowing has more in common with *curiositas*. The one, the pre-reflexive, seems to involve just the sort of intimate involvement with the world that is lacking in the distanced and potentially controlling stance of the other.

Now, while it may be, ultimately, that there is more at stake and more to go 'wrong' with re-presentational knowing, and, on the other hand, that an experiential whole-hearted, pre-reflexive engagement with reality more apparently resembles *studiositas*, it would be foolish, I think, if not naïve to assert the simple equations '*pre-reflexive-participation equals studious equals good*' and '*re-presentational manipulation equals curious equals bad*'.<sup>18</sup> For a start, the sense in which the term 'participation' is used differs in the two cases; the psychological and theological usages, although not dissimilar, are clearly not identical. Psychologically speaking it is the act of knowing in a pre-reflexive sense, *within* creation, that is more obviously participatory, whereas, theologically speaking, the fact of *any knowing at all* is participatory in the life of God; as Griffiths states 'subjects and objects of appetites share the fundamental property of being creaturely participants in God'.<sup>19</sup> This suggests that the force of the theological argument must apply, ontologically speaking, to

---

<sup>18</sup> See McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary*, p. 2, for a related claim.

<sup>19</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 117.

both pre-reflexive *and* reflexive knowing, so that both should ideally be able to be conducted in a studious manner. That this is the case immediately becomes more obvious when one remembers that the two psychological modes are *sub*-personal aspects of knowing, that is to say they are accounts of how part or parts of the person engage with reality, whereas the theological manners apply to the person as a whole. Notwithstanding the fact that a person might *emphasise* one or other mode more than the other, all normal personal knowing (with the possible exceptions of psychopathologies such as autism or following cerebral injury) involves a mixture, more or less, of both modes. Finally, we must assume that all modes of knowing can become seriously damaged and as such can lapse into *curiositas*; this is not only a 'left-hemisphere' risk or liability. It may be, however, that *extremes* of either pre-reflexive or of re-presentational knowing, the one without the mitigation of the other, are particularly prone to damage: pre-reflexive because it lacks the checking impulse of the reflexive, reflexive because it risks a distanced and 'objectifying' stance – which is of course McGilchrist's argument in part – but this is to anticipate.

For these reasons alone we need a more careful categorisation of the relation between pre-reflexive and reflexive knowing modes and studious or curious manners, as well as some clearer articulation of the dynamic of modes and the manners. To help us here a further distinction which Griffiths refers to, between *sensibilia*, and *intelligibilia*, is worth first noting.<sup>20</sup> '*Sensibilia* are things sensed, or capable of being sensed, by corporeal beings with bodily receptors and senses. When you read a sonnet, hear a harmony, stroke silk, smell saffron or taste truffles you are engaging with *sensibilia*, all of which are extended in

---

<sup>20</sup> This distinction was more relevant for pre-modern thinkers than the later one between conscious and non-conscious mentation, Anthony Kenny, *Aquinas on Mind* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 16-17.

space and through time and are therefore themselves physical and changing'.<sup>21</sup> Thus *sensibilia*, known through perception, are contingent and temporal. '[T]hey are subject to change, and not only to change but to change for the worse, which is to say to corruption and decay'.<sup>22</sup> Because of this *sensibilia* are deemed to be at a lower order of participation than *intelligibilia*, which, 'by contrast, are not subject to change of any sort. This is because they are extended neither in space nor in time...'<sup>23</sup> Griffiths further argues that the intellect, which deals with *intelligibilia*, is 'not reducible to or definable in terms of the operations of anything physical'.<sup>24</sup> This implies, for Griffiths, that 'the act of understanding is itself in part a participant in the realm of intelligibles, which is to say it is in itself in part nowhere and nowhen, even if it occurs, as for us it always does, to a particular person, in a particular place, at a particular time'.<sup>25</sup> As Griffiths explains this is easier to see in cases such as mathematics where its numbers and proofs, have no location in space or time, but also and interestingly, it is apparent with such things as beauty or justice. '[W]hen you judge something beautiful or someone just: in each case, you are judging the thing or person to be conformed to and thus a participant in the eternal order of beauty or justice'.<sup>26</sup>

The question now becomes to what extent can lived and reflexive modes be manifested in curious or studious manners and to what extent do these involve different orientations toward *sensibilia* and *intelligibilia*? As it turns out this question is not as complex as it seems but it is important to take it step by step. So, and risking what may seem a controlling mathetic analysis, there are four possible combinations we need to

---

<sup>21</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 34.

<sup>22</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 35.

<sup>23</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 36.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 37.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, see also William Shakespeare, Sonnet 18.

investigate: lived experience, both studious and curious, and reflexivity, both studious and curious, and to consider in each case the orientation toward the perceived (*sensibilia*) and the known (*intelligibilia*) yielding eight categories in total!

Consider first the perceiving of and engagement with *sensibilia* in the studious manner. In its pre-reflexive mode we expect such studiousness to be marked by a sense of immediacy, of *awe* and appreciative affect as we gaze into the depth of experience, in short we become aware of its *excessus*; such, for example, was true of Wordsworth's remembered visions from childhood: 'The scenes which were a witness of that joy/  
Remained in their substantial lineaments/ Depicted on the brain, and to the eye/ Were visible.../....and all their forms and changeful colours by invisible links were fastened to the affections.'<sup>27</sup> In reflexive mode, such *sensibilia* are then understood, thought about, remembered and inevitably categorised, and in this way the studious manner does not preclude reflexive investigation. But this is now a categorisation marked by feelings of loss and lament and also humble acceptance at the inadequacy of human knowing to do full justice to the *haeccaitas* of the things known. The universe in a grain of sand for Blake ironically signals the impossibility of encompassing or otherwise exhaustively owning knowledge of even the simplest part of creation. We can but *wonder* at its depths and ungraspability and its sheer given-ness, as we contemplate with it the overflow of the whole. Thus, as Griffiths rightly points out, the acceptance of the not-known is the mark of the studious knower and this, interestingly, seems true of our engagement even with the simplest of *sensibilia*, as with Wordsworth again, 'Even forms and substances are

---

<sup>27</sup> Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Book 1, lines 590-612.

circumfused/ By that transparent veil with light divine, /...../Present themselves as objects recognised,/ In flashes, and with a glory not their own...'.<sup>28</sup>

We can contrast these experiences with the perceiving of and engagement with *sensibilia* in the curious manner again in pre-reflexive and reflexive modes. Novelty seeking, sensory overload, and indulgence are likely to be the hallmarks of pre-reflexive curious knowing. Reflexively, however, such knowing will be characterised by an attitude to categorisation intended (using Griffiths term) to 'sequester' and 'possess' the known. Such self-indulgence, rather than other-awe, rapidly habituates and exhausts the apparent (though) not real possibilities of the known, as the knower restlessly moves on in search of more regions of darkness to conquer. But such knowing tends to *accedie* and exhaustion and lacks delight.<sup>29</sup>

Now consider understanding *intelligibilia* in the studious manner. In its pre-reflexive mode we expect this to be marked by essentially patient sitting in the presence of truth, beauty and goodness. The contemplation of the charm of a sonnet, the truthful elegance of a perfect equation or mathematics,<sup>30</sup> Shakespeare's insight of the 'eternal beauty (which) doth not fade',<sup>31</sup> Wordsworth's seeing the possibilities of goodness in those 'little, nameless, unremembered acts, of kindness and of love'<sup>32</sup> all involve joyful appreciation, contemplation akin to worship and humble understanding, but this time, ultimately and more directly of the source of Creation itself and not, as in the case of *sensibilia*, of the creation as a passing

---

<sup>28</sup> Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Book 5, lines 601-605.

<sup>29</sup> A similar analysis but based on Thomist anthropology was recently offered by Nicholas Lombardo, 'Boredom and its Discontents. Making Sense of a Modern Phenomenon with Aquinas's Theory of Emotions', presented at Blackfriars Oxford, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

<sup>30</sup> For a Christian Pythagorean appreciation of intelligible beauty, see Stratford Caldecott, *Beauty for Truth's Sake: On the Re-enchantment of Education* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009).

<sup>31</sup> William Shakespeare, Sonnet 18.

<sup>32</sup> Wordsworth, *Tintern Abbey*, lines 34-35.

lament laden reflection of its source. Nor, as before, need *studiositas* in intellectual knowing be a research stopper. In its reflexive search for further understanding it again accepts and embraces its ignorance as the companion and likely destination of its search. Hence, its classic manifestations are the mystical ascent,<sup>33</sup> and well-formed liturgies.<sup>34</sup> In both cases there is a natural apophysis, or at least, when language and action are not completely overrun and exhausted, a hesitation, an approach-avoidance, a stammer.<sup>35</sup> But in painstaking scholarship and research, which faithfully seeks understanding and truth without ever expecting to arrive, the same is also apparent.

Finally, contrast this studious participatory manner, where with Wordsworth '....with bliss ineffable/ I felt the sentiment of Being spread / O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still; / O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of thought,'<sup>36</sup> with understanding *intelligibilia* in a curious way. In its pre-reflexive mode we expect this to be marked by, formulaic possession, cant, ritualised cabalism, and the otherwise eloquent assertions of the supposedly known and mastered masquerading as received 'wisdom' and common 'sense'.<sup>37</sup> In reflexive mode we expect this to be marked by search for knowledge as utility,

---

<sup>33</sup> Turner, *The Darkness of God*, especially pp. 242-273.

<sup>34</sup> Pickstock, *After Writing*, pp. 169-219.

<sup>35</sup> Johannes Hoff reminds that 'Liturgical acts of praise exceed the second order reflexivity of human reason. To use a modern expression: The science of praise is pre-reflexive', Hoff, *The Analogical Turn*, p. 16 (MS) by which I take him to mean that the grounding and source of liturgy is pre-reflexive even if its expression requires (some) language; on the repetitions and false starts in high liturgy, see Pickstock, *After Writing*, p. 173; on 'stammer' see, Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, pp. 216-220.

<sup>36</sup> Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Book 2, lines 400-403.

<sup>37</sup> In a fascinating chapter, Sir Maurice Bowra compares and contrasts Wordsworth and Coleridge's ways of dealing with the dryness of 'writer's block' and its exploration in their respective poems 'Ode to Immortality' and 'Dejection'. Coleridge 'feels that he has lost the power to create through the imagination that *he* can no longer shape experience into beauty *and impose his will* on nature. [Whereas] Wordsworth sees nature as not merely living its own life but full of beauty and joy [he] continues to believe that nature ...has still much to give him, if will only be ready to receive it'. Sir Maurice Bowra, *The Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: OUP, 1950), pp. 88-91, emphases added. On the basis of this and many similar observations it is difficult not to see Wordsworth as the more 'studious' knower of the two. 'Instead of examining nature with a close, observant eye and extracting all that he could from it, he found himself unaccountably transported into another sphere of being, shapeless and frightening and beyond the reach of exact words', p. 92.

power and dominance. Examples abound, but they are likely to have in common a disregard for truth, a scepticism about the objectivity of beauty, and a cynicism about the very possibilities of goodness combined with an almost pathological dissociation of any intuitive sense of the convertibility of these.

Overall, what we can see in both the case of studiously knowing *intelligibilia* as well as *sensibilia* is an LGT from pre-reflexive, joyful awe, through increased wonder, deliberation and enquiry, to intensified joy and contemplation as the process of knowing deepens. But, and this is important, although the *epistemological* aspects can be seen as dialectical, its ontology ultimately depends on an apophysis in which all is grounded in the unknowable God and from whom it receives its final illumination. This leaves the studious knower Wordsworth '....feeling still/ That whatsoever point they gain, they yet/ Have something to pursue.../...that universal power/ And fitness in the latent qualities/ And essences of things, by which the mind/Is moved by feelings of delight,/To me came strengthened with a superadded soul'.<sup>38</sup> Such apophysis operates at the level of person as well as knowledge, both with respect to who is knowing and what is known. This follows not only because we are hidden in the logos, as *Imago Dei*, but more prosaically because human knowledge is necessarily fallible and limited, and being is inexhaustible. Self-awareness, also, is never fully defined. Completeness of knowing is thus impossible. But the deeper reason for all this of course is that studious knowing is ultimately a participation which privileges the *actuality* of Being itself in its excess not its hypothetical possibilities. The gift of being is its own truth guarantor but also a check on any possibility of human omniscience. Within curious knowing, by contrast, its dialectic leads not to an appreciation of the apophatic and a joyful

---

<sup>38</sup> Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Book 2, lines 320-328.

if humble delight in its mysteries, but to a more frenzied oscillation of hyper-reflexivity and search for certainty where the centre necessarily fails to hold and anxiety and stress result.

Which is a sobering thought, for thus far, arguably, all that I have achieved is to add a little more detail and analysis to Griffiths' treatment. But using the analogy of intimate touch we can add a further dimension to the way in which post reflexive, re-presented knowing differs in its studious and curious manners thereby elaborating his account a little. The studious 'caress' the known whereas the curious 'grasp'. In the former case, the knower (or lover for the two are ultimately synonymous) reverently shapes and responds her touch to the beloved; in the latter the knower holds onto and demands of the known that it conform in position and sometimes shape to the requirements of the knower. The former is therefore more accommodative in its knowing, the latter is more assimilative. Caress, too is marked by a confident hesitancy, grasp by a fearful power. Studious, sexual knowing (risking the oxymoronic sound of this!) is literally through tender touch, but all studious knowing participates in the loving, intimate caress within as well as of reality. Nor as we have seen does it expect to know exhaustively so that there are no regions of darkness or mystery remaining. And it is all the more erotic as a result.

### Conclusions

In this chapter, following Griffiths, we have distinguished two manners of knowing, *studiositas* and *curiositas* and two sets of entities that are known, *intelligibilia* and *sensibilia*. Adding to Griffith's account we considered how these theologically principled manners can interact with the two psychological modes examined in the last chapter. In the process we have made a little headway in using a theological grammar to organise further two important psychological categories. In this way, and in small part, theology helps



psychology complete its project. If this analysis is correct, there is nothing intrinsically disordered about re-presentational, reflexive modes, nor nothing intrinsically virtuous about pre-reflexivity. Instead, both modes can be used alone and in combination in appropriate or inappropriate ways and these ways can be articulated and recognised.

What the analysis then further suggests is that a proper (i.e. likely to be successful) Christian apologetics will require attention to be paid to these and other dimensions of human knowing, both in ourselves and in others, and in the process of catechesis itself. And we shall deal briefly with this in the concluding chapter.

## Chapter 5

Epilogue and conclusions:

Understanding communication: toward a postmodern apologetic

*A lasting inspiration, sanctified  
By reason, blest by faith: what we have loved,  
Others will love, and we will teach them how;  
Instruct them how the mind of man becomes  
A thousand times more beautiful than the earth  
On which he dwells, above this frame of things  
(Which, 'mid all revolution in the hopes  
And fears of men, doth still remain unchanged)  
In beauty exalted as it is itself  
Of quality and fabric more divine.*

*Wordsworth, The Prelude, Book XIV, lines 444-454*

Every age must find ways to commend the Christian message afresh, and every age probably believes itself more critically poised against the forces of darkness and unreason and charged with greater responsibility to share the Good News than any that have preceded it.<sup>1</sup> Arguably, however, we have reached a crucial impasse in our cultural development in the west, if development it is. The present phase of late modernity is commonly said to be marked by global, hyper-reflexivity - a tendency to submit all previously accepted habits, practices, beliefs and received wisdoms to recursive critical scrutiny in which deconstructive analysis can, seemingly destructively at times, apparently spiral out of control. The result, for this and for many other more complex, socio-cultural, as well as intellectual reasons, is a scepticism about the very possibility of truth, an increased commodification of ideas to be bought or sold according to fashion, a loss of confidence in any sense of coherence or metanarrative, a radical immanence and, in the final analysis, a tendency to nihilism, intolerance, often in the name of liberal tolerance and rights, and bio-fascism. All of this,

---

<sup>1</sup> Not only the acts perpetrated on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, which removed for ever the view from one particular 110<sup>th</sup> floor, but also the savageries supposedly conducted by the west in the names of democracy and 'freedom' suggest, if we did not already realise, that we need the Christian message more than ever.

and much more can contribute to a growing sense of helplessness, panic, unease, chronic anxiety and sense of loss which seems to far exceed in its depth the anomie of mid C20th existentialism, though of course the two are not unconnected.<sup>2</sup>

Add to this the suggestion by McGilchrist that we have tipped into a phase of 'run away' left hemisphere activity in which the normal cultural pendulum which has in the past guaranteed a certain dynamic equilibrium may now be caught in a vicious feedback loop in which cultural forces and trends first reflect but then further select and amplify the patterns of thought, feeling and action which support and engender them, together with a condition where thought and knowing are so often marked by power and violence, then the prospect for hearing the Good News begins to look bleak.<sup>3</sup>

In this situation an imaginative, reflexive Christian apologetics marked by humility and *studiositas* is arguably needed more than ever. In fact, though not himself a theist, McGilchrist himself sees art and religion as our potential saviours from run-away re-representationalism and the use of knowledge for manipulative purposes.<sup>4</sup> If this is the case there is a responsibility to deploy some of the implications of our investigations. Hence, in this final short section of this short thesis, itself as much a trailer as an epilogue, as we ask how might this small exploration of the modes and manners of Christian knowing be used to inform and illuminate our apologetics, guide our conversations, and otherwise enrich our 'mountain walks' with friends. In other words, how can our conversations on understanding, increase understanding in our conversations?

---

<sup>2</sup> This depiction of postmodernity is baldly stated but I trust the picture is recognisable. My overall gloss on 'postmodernity' has been greatly influenced by Johannes Hoff's lecture 'Postmodernity: An Introduction in Recent Developments', delivered in Korea, 2009, and especially the version given at The University of Wales, Trinity St David, MTh Summer School, 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*, pp. 389-427.

<sup>4</sup> McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*, pp. 445-459.

## Guiding principles

What principles can we use to construct an effective apologetic for the Christian faith? I suggest there are four guiding principles which emerge naturally from our earlier discussions and which can be used in turn to guide the practice of apologetics.

First, the so called reflexive turn of late modernity, with its deconstructive acid, may seem to be detrimental to forms of religious faith, but reflexivity per se is inevitable, it simply needs to be used properly. Why is this? It is because as we saw in chapter 2, some sort of representational re-description is unavoidable for humans. The very fact that we can think and talk *about* things at all implies some level of re-presentation, categorisation and conceptualisation. Otherwise language is finished as a vehicle for apologetics. The issue, in fact, is not that we are precluded from talking about faith, but that we do not lose sight of the goal which is to encourage a lived faith, humbly and hospitably.<sup>5</sup> There will, therefore be space for abstract religious arguments in our apologetics but it is unlikely that these will suffice. As well as 'rationality', we are likely to need story, image, picture, metaphor and showing and doing as much as telling, to first inculcate a sense of the validity of the primary mode of religious engagement.<sup>6</sup> Such, indeed, was the apologetic strategy in chapter 2 and to the extent that it succeeded it can be seen as a proof-in-kind of the approach I have in mind.

---

<sup>5</sup> Bretherton, *Hospitality as Holiness*, pp. 121-159.

<sup>6</sup> Alister McGrath, *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Skeptics Find Faith* (Grand Rapids Mi.: Baker Books, 2012), especially pp. 93-125. See also Cottingham, *The Spiritual Dimension*, pp. 5-8, on the importance of *praxis*.

Second, and following from this, the primary mode of religious knowing reflects a pre-reflexive engagement with Reality. We can use 'primary' in two senses here, as earlier in time, and as ontologically more basic and meaningful. Either way, due regard needs to be taken of this in our apologetics. If Paul Moser is right, religious cognition must deal with a subtle, elusive, yet morally impelling God and one who requires 'personifying evidence'.<sup>7</sup> If this is the case this puts a heavy responsibility on ourselves as apologists and, ultimately, our interlocutors to stand in and for the truth and to try to inculcate a similar stance in our fellows.

Third, such 'evidences' for God are thus as much from first person and second person as they are from third person perspectives.<sup>8</sup> The validity and meaning of primary engagement with reality, on which religion builds, is to be found as much in the person's (subjective) perspective on the world as in any 'dispassionate' third person, *de dicto*, account. Recognising the need to be realist about our subjectivity<sup>9</sup> we can, if necessary adduce strong philosophical as well as theological arguments why people's reported phenomenology needs to be taken seriously.<sup>10</sup> An awareness of this means that we must value and treat reverently the experience and experiences of others, however strange these may seem or however at variance with a full participation in the divine, for intellectual as well as for charitable reasons. There can be no experience that at some level does not

---

<sup>7</sup> Paul Moser, *The Evidence for God: Religious Knowledge Reexamined* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 185-230.

<sup>8</sup> Moser, *The Evidence for God*, for example pp. 149, 159; John Cottingham, 'Confronting the Cosmos' Talk given at Trinity College Oxford to the Ian Ramsey Research Centre, 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> 'The problem now is how to be realist about subjects – which are it should be stressed, themselves natural phenomena, not some kind of invented spooks', Midgley, *Science and Poetry*, p. 83.

<sup>10</sup> Velmans, *Understanding Consciousness*, pp. 169-192.

‘participate’, and none is so far fallen as to not be in some sense held in being by God.<sup>11</sup>

This is a radical gospel, perhaps, but so is the Gospel.

Fourth arguments for Christianity need to be conducted in Christian humility and the knowledge that as Christians we are committed to a faith at the heart of which is a profound apophysis in our knowledge of things, ourselves and God. The argument for *studiositas* which we reviewed in the last chapter can be extended to cover our knowing how to communicate and how we model what we know, as well what we claim to know. Part of an overall apologetic strategy must be to demonstrate and help revive in others a sense of the lost or hidden, of human finitude and limitation, of the invisible *qua* invisible in the visible, not only to develop the undeveloped so much as to discover anew a respect for the unknown and unknowable.

#### Apologetics in Practice

So much, then, for a brief survey of (at least some) apologetic principles. If we abide by these there is some chance that the *auditus fidei* will be restored, anxiety in our postmodern condition reduced, and trust in truth, being, goodness, beauty and God revived, provided, that is, we are as ‘cunning as serpents’ in our tactics as well as ‘innocent as doves’ in our strategy (Mt 10:6). But here there is much work to be done to develop effective apologetic procedures but psychologically and catechetically.

Some this work will be to do with modes of knowing, some to do with manners, but I suspect, if the present arguments have any validity at all it will be in developing the *relation* of mode with mode, and of modes with manners that we will be most effective.

---

<sup>11</sup> Nicholas of Cusa, *De Dato Patris Luminum* in Jasper Hopkins (trans.), *Nicholas of Cusa’s Metaphysic of Contraction* (Minneapolis: Arthur J. Banning Press, 1983), 99,100,101,107,106,116. For access to PDF version see <http://jasper-hopkins.info/DeDato12-2000.pdf> (accessed 6th January 2011).

This will entail, first, the encouragement to think imaginatively,<sup>12</sup> and draw on the resources of the lived and pre-reflexive, but also to reflect on experience and give back the results to the re-experienced. In other words those we seek to catechise can be encouraged to think in the Wordsworthian mode, or more generally to be aware of and deploy what we earlier dubbed the LGT.<sup>13</sup> Non-identical repetition and reflection are at the root of this dynamic, as are recollection, contemplation and awe.

But as we saw in the last chapter it is the mature engagement of manner and mode that is the mark of a studious knower and it has to be the goal of an apologetic strategy not only somehow to communicate what is to be known, loved and understood, but also to school the *discipulus* in the manner of studious knowing, whether pre-reflexive or reflexive. This is likely to be challenging in a world that so often favours novelty, dominance, ownership and control, but to the extent that we succeed in modelling such knowing ourselves, our quiet joy and restful delight will have been infectious.

In any case, our tactics will need to acknowledge and utilise the reciprocity and symbolic interdependence of knowing. Knowing is reciprocal in that those who seek to teach as well as those who ‘receive’ understanding are not engaging in some dispassionate transfer or banking of ‘information’ or ideas from one world-separated mind-container<sup>14</sup> to another but are invited into participatory engagement with *intelligibilia* and ‘shared

---

<sup>12</sup> Several of the contributors to the excellent volume by Davison (ed.), *Imaginative Apologetics*, *op. cit.* develop this theme. See especially, John Milbank, ‘Foreword: An Apologia for Apologetics’, *op. cit.*, xiii-xxiii; Alison Milbank, ‘Apologetics and the Imagination’, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-45; Michael Ward, ‘The Good serves the Better and both the Best: C.S. Lewis on Imagination and Reason in Apologetics’, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-78.

<sup>13</sup> Chapter 3, this thesis.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (London: Penguin, 1996, first published by The Continuum Publishing Company 1970), pp. 52-67.



symbols'.<sup>15</sup> Regarding the latter, literary critic Helen Vendler sees their invention as one of 'the chief signs of poetic maturity'.<sup>16</sup> She suggests that we do not 'make literary discoveries alone, but as a member of a trans-historical cultural community of writers, readers and translators'.<sup>17</sup> To the extent that this is true of poetry it is also likely to be true of introducing others to religious texts and narratives. We are inviting them to indwell a world of religious symbols and realities which are shared synchronically, and diachronically transmitted, and situated. Such an invitation is ultimately one to rest delighted in knowledge and wisdom not to possess and sequester the new for our own use.

And of course pictures have long been appreciated as aids for explanation, not simply because they are worth a thousand words, or aid the click of comprehension, but because their iconic quality allows for studious contemplation. This is not new, pictures, stories and examples are well known as aids and examples and stimuli for the imagination,<sup>18</sup> but re-emphasising the participatory 'logic' of contemplation and the lived narrative engagement in apologetics perhaps is.

Nor should we necessarily expect always to be eloquent in our apologetics. For the false pursuit of eloquence can betoken the use of language to control and an overbearing confidence in what is known. Paradoxically, studious knowing and intersubjectivity grounded in true intimacy is typically characterised by teaching and communication marked

---

<sup>15</sup> Vendler, *Coming of Age as a Poet*, p. 55.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> McGrath, *Mere Apologetics*, pp. 93-125. Good examples of apologetic and implicitly or quasi-apologetic texts written for a variety of purposes which variously use a variety of such persuasive styles and devices include: Eamon Duffy, *Faith of our Fathers: Reflections on Catholic Tradition* (London: Continuum, 2004); Terry Eagleton, *Reason: Faith and Revolution: Reflections on the God Debate* (Terry Lectures) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Libby Purves, *Holy Smoke: Religion and Roots: A Personal Memoir* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999); Timothy Radcliffe, OP, *What is the point of being a Christian?* (London: Continuum, 2005).

by hesitation, humility and empathy. Ironically, apophatic contemplation and stammer are more likely, at times, to be better advertisements for an effective apologetic than the tongues of men and angels.<sup>19</sup> In a well-argued conclusion to his work, Griffiths points out that

‘the tentative and self-cancelling speech that stammers, is proper to the grammar of studiousness, and is altogether foreign to that of curiosity....The ordinary stammerer appears to his hearers to be simultaneously trying to speak and to prevent himself from speaking; just the same is true of the ideal-typical speech of the studious knower. Such a knower wants to speak: because she has something important to say: she wants to pass on her gift of her newfound intimacy with some creature to other creatures and to do so as an act of confession. But she also wants to prevent herself from speaking, to place her speech under the kind of erasure through which it remains audible (or visible in the case of writing). Because she knows that the intimacy she is communicating is profoundly inadequate to its object, and this needs to be signalled in the act of communication itself. Not to signal it would be to pretend to intimacies that cannot be experienced here below.’<sup>20</sup>

This is not to say, then, that we do not speak in our apologetics but that we speak ‘under erasure’ since what is to be known is inexhaustible, I am inadequate in my knowing, and you and I, as damaged creatures are limited in the extent to which we can share and communicate intimacies. Interestingly, and also picking up on earlier work by Pickstock, for Griffiths the catholic liturgy is the ideal ‘formative template for the stammer’<sup>21</sup> since we are invited to experience intimacies with God compared with which ‘sexual intercourse is a pale, participated shadow’.<sup>22</sup> But we can only do so in a manner involving approach and drawing

---

<sup>19</sup> Readers familiar with the recent film ‘The King’s Speech’ may wish to reflect on the effective juxtaposition of the eloquent demagoguery of Hitler in contrast to the literal stammer of the more studious (and more humble for all the limitations of his class) of King George VI.

<sup>20</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 219.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

back right up to the '*Domine non sum dignus*'.<sup>23</sup> Even when 'the final intimacy is given and received, the worshipper receives it always as a sinner, one suffering deep damage, even though one at the same time in a state of grace'.<sup>24</sup> And if this is true for the Eucharist it would seem to be doubly true for our apologetics, which are conducted before we even get as far as '*Introibo ad altare Dei*'.

But there is much work for the future here, and these are merely exploratory forays. If a mutual acknowledgement of learned ignorance is ultimately the hallmark of humble Christian persuasiveness so necessarily is a tolerance for apparent contradiction and a respect for paradox. As illumination is sought and graciously received through participatory, studious, joint attentive<sup>25</sup> participation, we must accept that as the shutters open light comes in, but shadows are also cast. Faithful apologetics in the last analysis involve a three way conversation, with each other and with God, and divine knowing, ultimately grounds, but is not yet our knowing.

### Concluding remarks

In this thesis I have attempted to outline some significant modes and manners of religious knowing and examined their interaction. I have tried to show how experiential and representational modes of relating to reality can be understood informally, poetically, and scientifically, and examined some of their consequences for religion and theology. I have, in addition, articulated theologically significant manners of knowing, and used these to organise the two psychological modes and their connection in theologically meaningful

---

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, p. 220.

<sup>25</sup> For a creative and stimulating extended discussion of grace and joint attention, see Andrew Pinsent, *The Second-Person Perspective in Aquinas's Ethics: Virtues and Gifts* (London: Routledge, 2012).

ways. Finally, I have made some tentative suggestions, as much by way of promissory notes for further work, how a self-reflexive understanding of these psycho-theological dynamics might be used to better inform our apologetic strategies and tactics.

Perhaps overall, however, the present small endeavour suggests the need to begin by imaginatively re-instilling a trust in the dignity and marvel of the person as a religious being, and thence to recover an enhanced sense of the *imago Dei*. Perhaps here, in conclusion, gentle humour, that classic right hemisphere function, can help. On Ash Wednesday, in one version of the liturgy at least, we are invited to ‘Remember man (sic.) that thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return’. Salutary though it is for the overly pious Christian to be told repeatedly of her finitude and materiality, it may be, however, that our responsibilities to our reductive, materialist, secular neighbour are best ironically expressed in a reverse parody of the liturgy, ‘Remember dust that thou art man’! For ‘Dust as we are, the immortal spirit grows/ Like harmony in music;’<sup>26</sup> and thus we can with Wordsworth remind, and

Instruct them how the mind of man becomes  
A thousand times more beautiful than the earth  
On which he dwells, above this frame of things  
(Which, ‘mid all revolution in the hopes  
And fears of men, doth still remain unchanged)  
In beauty exalted as it is itself  
Of quality and fabric more divine.<sup>27</sup>

And this way bring them closer to Almighty God.

oOo

---

<sup>26</sup> Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Book I, lines 340-341.

<sup>27</sup> Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Book XIV, lines 444-454

## Bibliography

Aquinas, Thomas, *Summa Theologiae* [1266-1273], trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London: Burns, Oates, and Washbourne, 1911).

Bretherton, Luke, *Hospitality as Holiness: Christian Witness amid Moral Diversity* (London: Ashgate, 2006).

Bowra, Sir Maurice, *The Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: OUP, 1950).

Caldecott, Stratford, *Beauty for Truth's Sake: On the Re-enchantment of Education* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009).

de Certeau, Michel, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

Cervantes, Fernando, 'Philosophy, Theology and Historical Knowledge', in Oliver Crisp, Mervyn Davies, Gavin D'Costa, and Peter Hampson (eds), *Christianity and the Disciplines: The Transformation of the University* (London: Continuum, 2012).

Coakley, Sarah, 'Introduction: Faith, Rationality and the Passions', *Modern Theology* 27.2 (2011), pp. 217-225.

Cottingham, John, *The Spiritual Dimension: Religion, Philosophy and Human Value* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Cottingham, John, 'Confronting the Cosmos: Scientific Rationality and Human Understanding', Talk given at the Ian Ramsey Research Centre, University of Oxford, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

Cupitt, Don, *The New Religion of Life in Everyday Speech* (London: SCM Press, 1999).

Cusanus, Nicholas, *De Visione Dei*, in Jasper Hopkins (trans.), *Nicholas of Cusa's Dialectical mysticism: Text, Translation, and Interpretive Study of De Visione Dei* (Minneapolis: Arthur J. Banning Press, 1985). For access to PDF version, see: <http://jasper-hopkins.info/dialecticalmysticism.pdf> (accessed 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2012).

Cusanus, Nicholas, *De Dato Patris Luminum* in Jasper Hopkins (trans.), *Nicholas of Cusa's Metaphysic of Contraction* (Minneapolis: Arthur J. Banning Press, 1985). For access to PDF version see <http://jasper-hopkins.info/DeDato12-2000.pdf> (accessed 6th January 2011).

Dixon, Thomas, 'Revolting Passions' *Modern Theology* 27.2 (2011), pp. 298-312.

Duffy, Eamon, *Faith of our Fathers: Reflections on Catholic Tradition* (London: Continuum, 2004).

Eagleton, Terry, *Reason: Faith and Revolution: Reflections on the God Debate* (Terry Lectures) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

Freire, Paul, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (London: Penguin, 1996, first published by The Continuum Publishing Company 1970).

Griffiths, Paul, *Intellectual Appetite* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009).

Hampson, Peter and Hoff, Johannes, 'Whose self? Which unification? Augustine's anthropology and the psychology-theology debate', *New Blackfriars* 91.1035 (2010), pp. 546-566.

Hampson, Peter and Boyd-MacMillan, Eolene M., 'Turning the telescope round: reciprocity in psychology-theology dialogue', invited contribution to the *Archive for the Psychology of Religion* 30 (2008), pp. 93-113.

Helm, Paul (ed)., *Faith and Reason* (Oxford: OUP, 1999).

Hoff, Johannes, *The Analogical Turn. Re-thinking (Post-) Modernity with Nicholas of Cusa* (Series 'Interventions' - Eerdmans Publishing Company, forthcoming).

Hoff, Johannes, 'Postmodernity: An Introduction in Recent Developments', lecture delivered in Korea, 2009, and especially the version given at The University of Wales, Trinity St David, MTh Summer School, 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2011.

Johnson-Laird, Phillip N., *Mental Models* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983).

Karmiloff-Smith, Annette, *Beyond Modularity: A Developmental Perspective on Cognitive Science* (London and Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1992).

Kenny, Anthony, *Aquinas on Mind* (London: Routledge, 1993).

Lakoff, George and Johnson, Mark, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).

Lane, Belden, *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring Desert and Mountain Spirituality* (Oxford: OUP, 1998 – OUP pbk, edition 2007).

Lindbeck, George, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Post-Liberal Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984).

Lombardo, Nicholas, 'Boredom and its Discontents. Making Sense of a Modern Phenomenon with Aquinas's Theory of Emotions', presented at Blackfriars Oxford, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

McGilchrist, Iain, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009).

McGrath, Alister, *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Skeptics Find Faith* (Grand Rapids Mi.: Baker Books, 2012).

Midgley, Mary, *Science and Poetry* (London: Routledge, 2001).

Milbank, Alison, 'Apologetics and the Imagination', In Andrew Davison (ed.), *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy and the Catholic Tradition*. (London: SCM Press, 2011), pp. 31-45.

Milbank, John, 'Foreward: An apologia for apologetics', in Andrew Davison (ed.), *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy and the Catholic Tradition*. (London: SCM Press, 2011), pp. xiii-xxiii.

Milbank, John, 'The Grandeur of Reason and the Perversity of Rationalism: Radical Orthodoxy's first Decade', in J. Milbank and S. Oliver (eds.), *The Radical Orthodoxy Reader* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 367-404.

Milbank, John, 'Philosophy: A Theological Critique', Stanton Lectures, University of Cambridge, 2011, available via:  
<http://theologyphilosophycentre.co.uk/2011/03/12/john-milbanks-stanton-lectures-2011/> accessed 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012.



Milbank, John, 'The New Divide: Romantic vs. Classical Orthodoxy', *Modern Theology* 26, 1 (2010), pp. 26-38.

Moser, Paul, *The Evidence for God: Religious Knowledge Reexamined* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Oliver, Simon, 'Actuality in Theology and Philosophy', in Christopher Craig Brittain and Francesca Aran Murphy, *Theology, University, Humanities: Initium Sapientiae Timor Domini* (Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011).

Pettet, E.C (ed.), *A Selection from John Keats*. (London: Longman, 1974).

Pickstock, Catherine, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

Pinsent, Andrew, *The Second-Person Perspective in Aquinas's Ethics: Virtues and Gifts* (London: Routledge, 2012).

Purves, Libby, *Holy Smoke: Religion and Roots: A Personal Memoir* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999).

Radcliffe, Timothy, OP, *What is the point of being a Christian?* (London: Continuum, 2005).

Sheldrake, Phillip, 'Placing the Sacred: Transcendence and the City', *Literature & Theology*, Vol. 21. No. 3 September 2007, pp. 243-258.

Soskice, Janet Martin, 'Naming God in Philo, Augustine and Aquinas', 7<sup>th</sup> Aquinas Colloquium, Blackfriars Oxford, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2012.

Stump, Eleanore, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering* (Oxford: OUP, 2010).

Taylor, Charles, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge Mass.: The Belknap Press, 2007).

Turner, Denys, *The Darkness of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998).

te Velde, Rudi, *Participation and Substantiality in Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

Velmans, Max, *Understanding Consciousness* (London: Routledge, 2009).

Vendler, Helen, *Coming of Age as a Poet* (Cambridge Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1993).

Wainwright, Alfred, *Fell Wanderer: The Story Behind the Guide Books*, (Kendal: Westmorland Gazette, 1966).

Wainwright, *A Pictorial Guide to the Lakeland Fells: Book One: The Eastern Fells* (Kendal: Self Published by author, 1960, engraved and printed by the Westmorland Gazette).

Wainwright, Alfred, *A Pictorial Guide to the Lakeland Fells: Book Four: The Southern Fells* (Kendal: Self Published by author, 1960, engraved and printed by the Westmorland Gazette).

Ward, Michael, 'The Good serves the Better and both the Best: C.S. Lewis on Imagination and Reason in Apologetics', in Andrew Davison (ed.), *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy and the Catholic Tradition*. (London: SCM Press, 2011), pp. 59-78.

Watts, Fraser, *Theology and Psychology* (London: Ashgate, 2002).

Wills, Gary, *Saint Augustine* (London: Phoenix, 2000).

Wordsworth, William, *A Guide to the Lakes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, first published under the pseudonym, Rev Joseph Wilkinson, by R. Ackerman, 1810).

Wordsworth, William, *Wordsworth Poetical Works*, edited by Thomas Hutchinson (Oxford: OUP, 1904, pbk, 1969).



## Appendix 2

### Meditation

*In approaching you, O God of all, my walk is uncertain and stumbling, my speech hesitant, my sight weak, I lose my way. I let go of the familiar to say yes to your mystery but I am afraid. At times I think I see you as I approach only to realise that your heights and depths are not (yet) to be seen, they are the greatest that I can imagine though I do not yet see them. But not that! They are greater than anything that I or anyone can ever think or see. Ways to you have always been, long before I was born, and will be there long after I am dead. It is foolish to think that I can 'approach' you since you are always already here, beneath my feet upholding me, ahead beckoning me, in the air and food that sustains me, inside guiding me, in the people I know - and yet you are 'in' none of these.*

*And I cannot do this alone. I have many guides and maps to help, but these only take on a reality as I move, experience, interact with you and your creation. I only start to understand fully what I have been taught as I experience more; and I experience more fully as I think of what I have been taught and others have discovered with your help. Ever changing in its reflections, ever constant beauty is yours – I see that all the time.*

*My life makes sense in your Word since you are the Way, the Truth and the Life. You are my rock, my mountain, my stronghold, my precipice, my abyss, my friend...and all and none of and beyond these! My views are but glimpses of you that change as I move. More and more is revealed, but yet more and more is concealed. How much more is there to be seen, we hear! How much I come to love you and long for you in what I see, through its beauty, though it is so often through mist darkly. I come to love you too in what I don't yet see. And yet I long more for what I can't ever see, because you are beyond seeing, you who invisibly uphold the seen and unseen.*

*Maker of all things, seen and unseen, visible and invisible, beyond visibility and invisibility,  
guide me and save me! Save me from my distracting neediness! Show me how my route and your  
Way combine.*